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Nation's Top FDA Official Discusses Agency's Mission at UM During Annual Hartman Lecture

UNIVERSITY, Miss. — Wielding regulatory power over a broad range of items from nutritional supplements and prescription drugs to animal feed and cell phones, the Food and Drug Administration has a profound impact on the daily lives of all Americans.

The FDA's top official discusses the agency's mission and policies during the 2001 Charles W. Hartman Memorial Pharmacy Lecture at The University of Mississippi. Dr. Bernard A. Schwetz, acting principal deputy commissioner of food and drugs, speaks at 1:30 p.m. April 27 at Fulton Chapel.

The lecture, part of the university's Celebration Weekend activities, also includes the 2001 Pharmacy Alumnus of the Year award

"We're excited about the visit of the highest ranking FDA official ever to our campus," said Dr. Robert D. Sindelar, interim dean of pharmacy.

Schwetz, an elected member of the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine and a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association, is a nationally recognized expert in reproductive and developmental toxicology. An adjunct professor at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, he has extensive experience working with industry, academia and government agencies.

He has served as the FDA's top official since January. He previously was acting deputy commissioner of food and drugs and senior advisor for science, and served as director of the agency's National Center for Toxicological Research from 1993 to 1999.

Before joining the FDA in 1993, he was acting director of the Environmental Toxicological Program at the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Environmental

Health Sciences in North Carolina.

This year's lecture is hosted by the School of Pharmacy and the UM Medical Center and sponsored by Dynamic Medical Communications.

The program also honors Dr. Thomas C. Hardin as the Pharmacy Alumnus of the Year. Hardin, a native Mississippian, graduated from the university with bachelor's degrees in biology and chemistry in 1971. After two years of teaching and coaching in the Jackson area, he returned to earn a bachelor's degree in pharmacy.

He later completed his Pharm.D. degree at the University of Texas.

Since 1980, Hardin has served on the faculties of pharmacy schools at the University of Colorado, University of Texas and UM. He also served 18 years as a clinical pharmacy specialist in infectious diseases and nutritional support at the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital in San Antonio, Texas.

He served as president of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy in 2000 and is the chair of the board of trustees for the ACCP Research Institute. In 1999, he joined Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceutical Inc. as a scientific liaison for anti-infectives.