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UTEP Announces 2008 Distinguished Alumni; AMA President-Elect, Renowned Attorney, Groundbreaking Journalist to Be Honored

EL PASO, Texas, Aug. 5 (AScribe Newswire) -- The University of Texas at El Paso and the UTEP Alumni Association are proud to announce the 2008 recipients of the Distinguished Alumni Award.

- J. James Rohack, president-elect, American Medical Association
- Ruben Salazar (posthumously), groundbreaking journalist honored on a U.S. postage stamp in 2008
- R. Paul Yetter, nationally recognized attorney, co-founder of Yetter & Warden, LLP

UTEP's Distinguished Alumni Award honors some of the university's most accomplished graduates who have not only distinguished themselves professionally, but also have demonstrated dedication to the university or their community.

The honorees will be recognized during UTEP's Homecoming Week Oct. 5-11.

About the 2008 honorees:

J. James Rohack recently was named president-elect of the American Medical Association, the nation's largest physician organization. He will assume the presidency in June 2009, followed by a term as immediate past president ending in 2010.

A senior staff cardiologist at Scott & White Clinic in Temple, Texas, Rohack received a bachelor of science in psychology with high honors from UTEP in 1976 and his doctor of medicine degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston in 1980.

Rohack was first elected to the AMA Board of Trustees in 2001 and served as chair in 2004-2005. He was re-elected to a final four-year term in 2005. He chairs the AMA commissioners on the Joint Commission and represents the AMA as a principal of the Hospital Quality Alliance. Rohack also chairs the National Advisory Council to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

Rohack is a professor in both the Department of Medicine and the Department of Medical Humanities in Medicine at the Texas A&M Health Science Center College of Medicine. He continues his clinical practice at Scott & White where he serves as director of the Center for Healthcare Policy and medical director for system improvement of the Scott & White Health Plan.

He received the Gold Nugget Award from UTEP's College of Liberal Arts in 2002 and was named the Ashbel Smith Distinguished Alumnus by the UTMB in 2000.

Ruben Salazar was a groundbreaking journalist who gave a voice to Hispanic Americans during the 1960s. Salazar was honored on a U.S. postage stamp as part of the American Journalists Series in 2008.

He is most recognized for his award-winning articles on the lives of the Los Angeles Hispanic community. At the age of 42, he was killed while covering the National Chicano Moratorium March in East

Los Angeles in 1970.

Salazar is believed to be the first Mexican-American journalist to work as a reporter for the Los Angeles Times, have a column in a major English-language newspaper, and work as a foreign correspondent.

Born in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, and raised in El Paso, he earned his bachelor's degree in journalism from Texas Western College (now UTEP) in 1954.

In 2003, the UTEP Department of Communication honored the trailblazing newsman, by creating the Ruben Salazar Spanish-Language Media Program under the Sam Donaldson Center for Communication Studies.

R. Paul Yetter is co-founder of Yetter, Warden & Coleman L.L.P., a high-stakes business and technology litigation firm that has won more than \$1 billion in judgments and settlements.

Yetter is a nationally recognized attorney who received his bachelor of arts in business from UTEP in 1980. He later earned his juris doctor from Columbia University in 1983.

Yetter serves as chair of the Alliance for Judicial Funding Inc., a nonprofit, nonpartisan group that assists the legislative efforts of the Texas state judiciary. He also serves as trustee of the Texas Judicial Foundation, which funds state judicial education programs. Yetter is a member of the Southern District of Texas Committee on Admissions; and a member of the Columbia Law School Board of Visitors.

He has been named a Texas Super Lawyer by Texas Monthly magazine and among the Top Ten Trial Lawyers in the Country by the National Law Journal. He received a Presidential Citation for service to the State Bar in 1996 and was honored in 2005 as a Gold Nugget Award recipient by UTEP's College of Business Administration as an outstanding alumnus.

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CONTACT: Kimberly Miller, UTEP Public Information, 915-747-5747 or 915-491-8907

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO: The University of Texas at El Paso is a major research university at the heart of the U.S.-Mexico border committed to the ideals of access and excellence. A leader among Hispanic-serving institutions, UTEP enrolls more than 20,000 students and is the only doctoral research university in the nation with a student body that is a majority Mexican American. UTEP has graduated more than 85,000 students over its 94-year history.

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