

\$3,417,630 GRANT FOR TUFTS MEDICAL PIONEERING HEALTH PROGRAMS

Tufts University School of Medicine has been awarded an Office of Economic Opportunity grant of \$3,417,630 for its two pioneering comprehensive neighborhood health centers—the Columbia Point Health Center in Boston and a rural health center under development in Bolivar County, Mississippi—and related activities in health careers job training and health care research.

The new O. E. O. research and demonstration grant, effective for a year from January 15, 1967, caps an initial 18-month effort during which Tufts opened and operated the nation's first Poverty Program health center in Boston, planned the first rural health center for Mississippi, and successfully demonstrated the effort to intervene in the poverty cycle by merging health care with community organization and community action involving the poor themselves in the planning and implementation of health programs.

Since the Tufts program was initiated with a \$1,168,000 grant in June, 1965, it has served as a model for nine other O. E. O.—funded neighborhood health centers across the nation, and—through the interest of Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy—led directly to an appropriation of \$50 million in the current national poverty program to fund approximately 25 more health centers of this type.

The new grant provides for continuation and expansion of the Columbia Point health program, full implementation of the Bolivar County, Mississippi, health center, and increased job training and health care research. The entire project—north and south—is known as the Tufts Comprehensive Community Health Action Program (TCCHAP).

Project Co-Directors are Dr. Count D. Gibson, Jr., Chairman of the Department of

Preventive Medicine and Dr. H. Jack Geiger, Head of the department's Division of Community Health, which directs the Tufts Comprehensive Health Action Program.

Of the \$3,417,630 in the new grant, approximately \$1.4 million is allocated for the direct costs of the Columbia Point Health Center and approximately \$1.6 million for the costs of the planned Mississippi health center, for health care research, and for the overall program direction by Drs. Geiger and Gibson and their colleagues.

Of the Columbia Point funds, approximately \$900,000 are allocated to the costs of medical care for the community's 6,000 residents. This includes the cost of a major new program of dental care, to be added to the Columbia Point Health Center with the cooperation of the Tufts Dental School. Also funded by the Columbia Point allocation in the new grant is expansion of the training program to develop new health career jobs for local residents, both to provide an upward route out of poverty for low-income workers and to help meet critical health manpower shortages. In its first year of operation, the Columbia Point Health Center served more than 5,400 of the 6,000 residents at Columbia Point.

As the nation's first O. E. O.-funded rural health center, the Tufts-Delta Health Center in northern Bolivar County will face formidable problems. It must serve a population of some 10,000 to 14,000 persons scattered all over a 400-square-mile area, in the Mississippi Delta, a great cotton-plantation region near the Mississippi River and about 100 miles south of Memphis.

These projects have been written up previously in the Tufts Medical Alumni Bulletin in the November, 1965 and the November, 1966 issues.