

CENTER TIMES

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CAMPUS EDITION

UT Southwestern cares for COVID-19 patients, plans staggered return to campus

By Carol Marie Cropper

As COVID-19 spread across North Texas, UT Southwestern stepped up to care for patients infected with the coronavirus, expand testing for the disease, and help search for a treatment through clinical trials, including the use of convalescent plasma obtained from recovered patients.

By late April, with the number of COVID-19 patients declining at William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital, President Dr. Daniel K. Podolsky said planning had begun for a gradual return of activities on campus while maintaining a safe environment for faculty, students, and staff. The University's Emergency Operations Center, comprised of top leaders to manage the institution's response to the crisis, began talking about how "in a sensible, stepwise fashion" to bring researchers back to campus and resume nonurgent procedures and surgeries – "subject to the evolution of the circumstances around us," Dr. Podolsky said in a campus briefing on April 22.

On that date, the number of patients hospitalized at Clements University Hospital either confirmed with COVID-19 or awaiting test results was nine, down from a high of 38 earlier in the month. They received care in a dedicated floor and intensive care unit set up at the hospital.

Following a month of shelter-in-place restrictions in Dallas County, data in late April suggested the

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Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center

Simmons Cancer Center joins elite network of U.S. institutions

By Patrick McGee

The Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center has joined the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), an alliance of 30 distinguished cancer centers throughout the United States.

The decision in March by NCCN recognizes Simmons Cancer Center's elite status and will deepen its collaboration with national peers at the highest levels.

"Our entrance into this prestigious group does not just recognize the stature of the Simmons Cancer Center, but opens new doors to our strategic vision for cancer research and patient care," said Dr. Carlos L. Arteaga, Director of UT Southwestern's Simmons Cancer Center. "Collaboration is the hallmark of medical advances, and our

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COMMENCEMENT CELEBRATION

Graduating in the era of COVID-19

Out of safety, Medical School makes tough call to hold a virtual Commencement as Graduate School postpones celebration to 2021



Dr. M. Roy Wilson, President of Wayne State University in Detroit, will deliver the Medical School keynote address.

By Debbie Bolles

Medical School graduation – a milestone for new physicians signifying the completion of four dedicated years of intense learning and clinical experience – will be virtual this year in light of COVID-19.

Because of the ongoing pandemic and Dallas County rules restricting large gatherings, UT Southwestern Medical School leadership made the tough decision to hold a virtual Commencement ceremony for the 226 graduates of the Class of 2020. The virtual ceremony – with the same essence of pomp and circumstance as expected with a live event – will be available to watch online starting Saturday, May 2, at 2 p.m. Family and friends are encouraged to view as well.

"The decision was a difficult one, since Commencement and the activities that surround it are one of the most time-

honored traditions at UT Southwestern. It is a milestone meant to be celebrated with applause, cheers, and hugs, in the presence of those we love most. During these unprecedented circumstances, we hope to accomplish this same spirit through virtual means," said Dr. W. P. Andrew Lee, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Provost, and Dean of the Medical School.

2020 COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

Dr. M. Roy Wilson, President of Wayne State University in Detroit, will deliver the keynote address in the prerecorded program. Dr. Daniel K. Podolsky, President of UT Southwestern, will confer degrees on the graduates, followed by presentation of the candidates by

Dr. Lee. As each name is called, the graduate's photo will be shown along with their residency placement and any dual degree or graduation distinction. A pause in the program will allow graduates time to recite

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Ho Din Award winner aspires to be an advocate for women

By Carol Marie Cropper

Dr. Priyanka Gaur came from a family of engineers on her father's side and doctors on her mother's. She headed off to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) for college thinking she would explore engineering, but her desire to care for patients led her to medicine instead.

"In the end, it really came down to wanting to build therapeutic relationships with patients and a fascination for the human body and health care system," explained the recent UT Southwestern Medical School graduate and winner of this year's Ho Din Award, the school's most prestigious and oldest prize for a medical student.

Established in 1943 by Southwestern Medical Foundation, the Ho Din Award recognizes a student with the attributes inherent in great physicians. Presented by a member of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, it comes with a medal, a certificate, and a \$10,000 scholarship.

"Dr. Gaur is well-deserving to join the group of previous Ho Din winners," said Dr. Richard Hoffman, Southwestern Medical Foundation Trustee and presenter of the 2020 Ho Din Award. "From the excellent academic achievement she has accomplished at UT Southwestern, to her diverse extracurricular activities, to concurrently



Dr. Priyanka Gaur

earning a Master of Public Health degree, it is obvious that she cares deeply for her community, patients, and colleagues."

Dr. Blake Barker, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Associate Professor of Internal Medicine, spoke highly of Dr. Gaur's traits resulting in the honor.

"Her patients will be thankful to have Priyanka Gaur as their physician," Dr.

Barker said. "She truly represents the exemplary qualities of a modern physician, including her clinical acumen, ability to work effectively within a team, and – most of all – her humanism at the bedside."

The aspiring Ob/Gyn is a first-generation American. Her parents met in India and moved here so her mom could complete a medical residency and become a doctor just like her sister and brother, and so her father could complete his master's degree in computer science and work as an engineer, just as his father had.

She grew up in Austin, where she received the Outstanding Student Award for the Department of Sciences her senior year of high school. Still, medicine was not a given. "I really liked math as well," she said.

But by her sophomore year at MIT, Dr. Gaur had decided to pursue medicine. "My heartstrings were pulling me to this profession," she said. After suffering a mild concussion while playing on MIT's soccer team, she became interested in the brain and graduated with a bachelor's degree in brain and cognitive science.

"I could never have guessed when I entered medical school that I would go into Ob/Gyn," she said recently. But while working her way through rotations in the various specialties at UT Southwestern, her

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Visit our website at utsouthwestern.edu/ctplus

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Two postdocs win prestigious awards for exceptional research work in biophysics, diabetes.

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STEPPING UP

Longtime employee Thelma Morgan wins Heart Month competition by walking 85,637 steps in her father's honor.

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FOCUS: COVID-19 CRISIS

Students jump into action to volunteer during COVID-19 crisis

By Patrick Wascovich

Hundreds of UT Southwestern students, led by class leaders of the Medical School, launched an unprecedented wave of volunteerism in mid-March as campus educational programs and research activities scaled back amid concerns over COVID-19.

While UTSW's three schools adjusted to a new dynamic of remote learning and social distancing, the student leadership group – Oludamilola "Dami" Akinmolayemi, Jennifer Bachand, Anthony Han, Jordan Hughes, Laura Kenyon, Priscilla Tanamal, and Andrew Tran – reached out to Deans and faculty members to explore how students could help across the clinical spectrum.

Through a unique and thoughtful process, leadership in Health System Affairs identified immediate as well as long-term needs that could support or supplement the efforts of front-line clinical teams and staff while maintaining the health and safety of students. This partnership between the Health System and the University is fully aligned with national guidelines for medical student volunteerism, allowing learners to provide maximum support while minimizing their own risk.

Volunteer opportunities include helping to screen hospital visitors, answering phones, moving furniture, and delivering supplies, among others.

Mobilizing a volunteer army

An initial chat room appeal went out to students on March 16, and within a day almost 400 had signed up

for various shifts and efforts.

"The response of my fellow classmates has blown me away," said Mr. Han, a second-year medical student who coordinated shifts of entry-point volunteers.

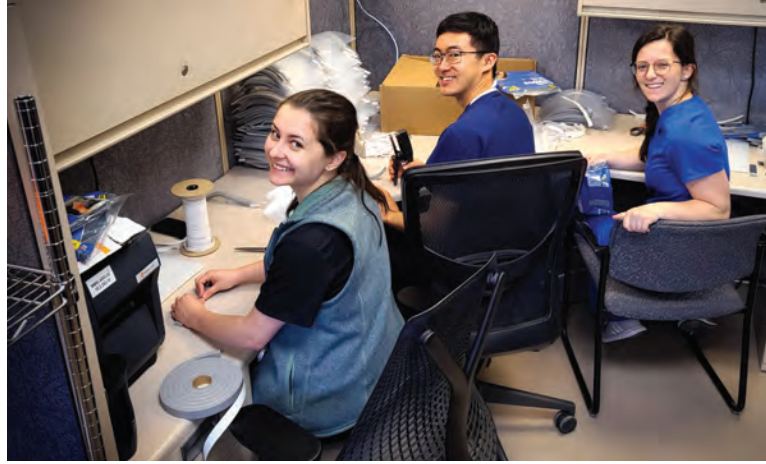
Third-year medical students Reilly Sample and Connie Ma were among the initial volunteers screening hospital staff and patients on March 18, when new policies on hospital visitations went into effect due to the COVID-19 outbreak. They were part of a five-person team on-site at 5:30 a.m. at an entrance to William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital to survey and provide wristbands to individuals cleared to enter while being protected themselves with necessary personal protective equipment.

"Our core clerkships were canceled indefinitely, and so this serves as a way for us to still contribute to the health and well-being of our patients," Mr. Sample said. "Medical students from all four classes came together and filled in wherever needed."

The volunteers adjusted to the changing clinical landscape to ensure the health and safety of patients, visitors, learners, faculty, and staff.

"I chose to join in this endeavor because it was very obvious that there was a severe need for personnel in the hospital," said MS2 Anjali Chacko, who pulled screening shifts at the Outpatient Building. "Helping out was the least I could do while physicians are risking their lives every day."

Mr. Akinmolayemi, an MS4 who is President of the Class of 2020, is used to the heartwarming feeling of giving



From left: medical students Rachel Hurst, Terrence Liu, and Ashley Farley participate in volunteer response efforts.

back. "We are now in a period where all hands need to be on deck to help fight the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic within our community," he said. "There is not a better time in my medical school years to be involved. My community needs me and I am ready to do whatever I can within my capacity."

Cynthia Young, Assistant Vice President, Executive Administration for Health System Affairs, said: "Our commitment is always compassionately delivering exceptional patient care. During a time of unusual challenge, that means all hands on deck – in some areas, more hands than usual. I have been so impressed by the remarkable willingness of so many students to swiftly make a significant, positive difference in the lives of our patients and staff."

More heed call to help

By March 23, a second wave of volunteers from UTSW's other schools was forming as learners from the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and the School of Health Professions had ramped down laboratory investigations and experimental protocols of their programs.

"With clinical training and rotations suspended for our second-year students, we are not surprised that many have been seeking opportunities to serve others in our community," said Dr. Jon Williamson, Dean of the School of Health Professions.

"We did not initially limit access to lab operations, so most graduate students have been busy winding things down," added Dr. Andrew Zinn, Dean of the Graduate School. "We're planning to reach out to the student lead-

ership to invite our students to assist with nonmedical support activities like providing child care to help providers continue to work in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic."

Dr. Angela Mihalic, Dean of Medical Students and Associate Dean for Student Affairs, said the continued spirit of providing aid is inspiring.

"I could not be prouder of this purely voluntary effort," said Dr. Mihalic, herself a 1995 graduate of UT Southwestern Medical School. "I am so grateful to the student body who have contributed in various ways to serve our community and society at large."

Anurag Gupta, an MS2 who worked shifts at the Outpatient Building and Clements University Hospital, summed up the volunteer mindset, noting: "Thousands of folks are working around the clock to contain this crisis. They deserve all the real thanks. Volunteering to help relieve the pressure is the least we can do to try and make their lives just a little bit easier. And when the alternative is to sit on my couch and just watch it all unfold, the choice is clear."

Dr. Williamson holds the Arnold N. and Carol S. Ablon Professorship in Biomedical Science.

Dr. Zinn holds the Rolf Haberecht and Ute Schwarz Haberecht Deanship of the UT Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

More online: Read the full story on *Center Times Plus* at utsouthwestern.edu/ctplus.

Facilities: Creating miracles from the ground up

By Lori Sundeen Soderbergh

An army of nearly 400 Facilities personnel keep UT Southwestern buildings operating 24/7 throughout the year. During the COVID-19 outbreak, it's been all hands on deck as requests for construction work and other needs have rolled in.

One of their most urgent projects was building a UT Southwestern COVID-19 testing lab facility. Working with several other departments including Clinical Laboratory Services, Facilities Management, Information Resources, UTPD-Access Control, and the Office of Safety and Business Continuity, Facilities quickly renovated 325 square feet of formerly unused space in the BioCenter where new equipment was installed to analyze tests developed by the Department of Pathology. Workers also built a 210-square-foot access corridor.

"In just three days, March 19-21, our building maintenance and utilities crews built the equivalent of a clean room at the BioCenter, sufficiently robust to accommodate all requirements associated with two high-capacity COVID-19 testing devices," said Juan Guerra, Vice President of Facilities Management.

The testing lab set up in the BioCenter is just one example of several high-priority projects completed in record time by the Facilities staff to meet urgent health care needs during the crisis, according to Mr. Guerra.

"This is a deployment on a scale we haven't done before, in a rapidly changing situation," said Ann Tate, Director of General Services for Facilities Management. "We are an army of busy bees



Driver Shonnette Bennett practices social distancing on shuttles by reminding passengers to keep 6 feet apart.

working 16-20 hours a day to build and maintain everything this effort requires. Everyone enjoys the honey, but few see inside the hive."

Over one weekend, a vacant dental clinic in the Bass Administrative and Clinical Center was converted into a negative air pressure area for a COVID-19 patient screening clinic. Negative air pressure is a system that pumps air out of a building, away from people inside. Exhaust fans are installed to pull potential airborne contaminants out of the building and maintain a clean environment within. To do this successfully, every nook and cranny must be completely sealed.

"This was an astonishing feat that our team accomplished in the 55-year-old Bass building. Our crews had to create a negative air pressure environment in a space that was never designed for this type of use," said Mr. Guerra. Facilities staff have also converted emergency department pods at William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital to quarantine-ready spaces with negative air pressure. They even erected an emergency department triage tent with a negative air pressure space – "not easy to do inside a tent," as he pointed out.

Outside the Bass Center, a drive-through clinic for preliminary testing of symptomatic patients was set up using tents. Plumbers installed propane heaters to help health care personnel on cold days. Electricians put up tents, and building managers installed signs.

"We all lose our titles in this situation. Everyone simply stands up and asks what needs to be done. It's one thing to do your job, but it's another to keep going into the night and the wee hours of the



Tents were set up for drive-through testing outside the Bass Center.



Painter Americo Alvarez and carpenter Victor Israelian work on a containment barrier at the newly renovated clinic inside the Bass Center.

morning to get it done," said Orlando Salazar, Assistant Director of Building Maintenance.

The Facilities staff has a hand in virtually everything on campus. While many other departments are now working remotely, this staff must be on campus, working in staggered and flex schedules, often taking on new duties or jumping in to help where demand is high. For example, some grounds workers, movers, and carpenters were redeployed to sanitize high-touch areas such as light switches and door knobs throughout the day.

"All of our efforts are so very important in the race to control and defeat this terrible pandemic," said Senior Electrician Anthony Ramirez. "UTSW is literally on the front lines, and I am honored to be

a part of our mission. Whatever it takes, you can count on us."

Another common service that never stops moving is UT Southwestern's transportation system. The Campus Connector normally transports 450,000 people a year. Ridership is now limited to five passengers per shuttle to accommodate social distancing. Shuttles are sanitized throughout the day.

"The shuttle drivers are close to my heart. It's vital that they feel safe," said Ms. Tate. "We educate them every day and we have been as transparent as possible."

About one-third of the Facilities Department has been with UT Southwestern for more than 10 years, and their sense of commitment is high.

"The rookies have been here for five to 10 years. Many others, including myself, have been with UT Southwestern 20 to 30 years. I think everyone believes in UTSW and that what we do is special and important," said Mr. Salazar.

"Facilities staff work to make your job easier. We are like a family that comes together and does what it takes to get it done," agreed Ms. Tate.

Here's what some Facilities staff have said to one another to keep morale and spirits high:

"You know, what we are doing these days might be the most important work of our careers."
– Electrician Chris Babb

"The servant leadership I've witnessed among our front-line drivers has been remarkable. Their resilience and compassion to all has been my drive to be a better leader, and most of all a better human being."
– Dasha Clay, Manager of Transportation

CENTERTIMES

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FOCUS: COVID-19 CRISIS

International research team finds human protein that potentially inhibits coronavirus

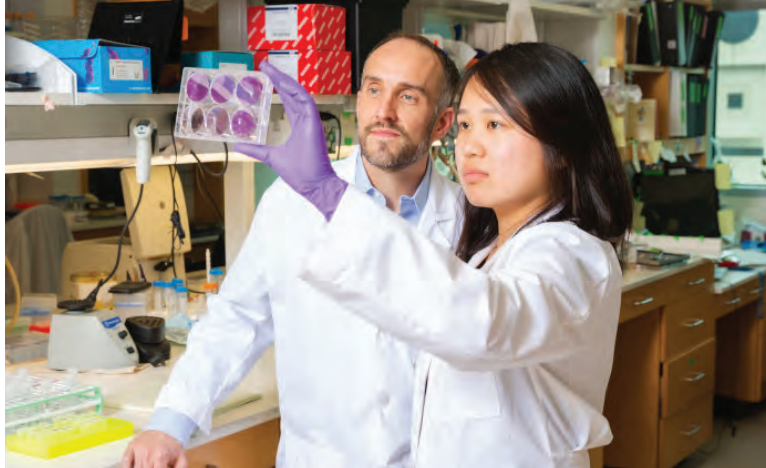
By Deborah Wormser

A protein produced by the human immune system can potentially inhibit several coronaviruses, including the one behind the current COVID-19 outbreak, an international team of investigators reported recently. The research reveals that the LY6E protein impairs the coronavirus' ability to initiate infection, which could lead to treatments for the illness.

Strikingly, mice lacking Ly6e (the mouse version of the gene) were highly susceptible to a usually nonlethal mouse coronavirus, the researchers reported in *bioRxiv*, an online preprint server that posts articles prior to peer review.

"Remarkably, this potent inhibitory effect carried over to all the coronaviruses we tested, including those responsible for the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) outbreak in 2003, the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) coronavirus in 2012, and the recently emerged causative agent of COVID-19, known as SARS-CoV-2," said Dr. John Schoggins, Associate Professor of Microbiology and a corresponding author on the report.

The story begins many years ago when, as a postdoctoral researcher in the lab of Dr. Charles Rice at The Rockefeller University, Dr. Schoggins was screening for antiviral genes and found that the LY6E gene unexpectedly enhanced the



Drs. John Schoggins and Katrina Mar conducted research that revealed the LY6E protein impairs the coronavirus' ability to initiate infection, a finding that could lead to treatments for the illness.

infectivity of the virus that causes flu. He continued this line of research after joining UT Southwestern. The project is currently led by Dr. Katrina Mar, a postdoctoral researcher in his laboratory.

In 2017, Dr. Stephanie Pfaender, a postdoctoral researcher from the Swiss lab of Dr. Volker Thiel, one of the world's leading experts on coronavirus biology, visited the Rice lab to use Schoggins' screening technology to find genes that inhibit coronavirus. This led to the discovery that LY6E potentially inhibited coronavirus.

"When we later learned that LY6E

did the opposite with coronavirus – that is, it inhibited rather than enhanced infection – we were immediately intrigued, particularly because we had already developed an animal model to study the role of LY6E during viral infection," Dr. Schoggins said. Thus, the Thiel and Rice labs began to further study the LY6E protein.

The team had worked for almost two years on its study before the current coronavirus outbreak. They had found that the LY6E protein inhibited other coronaviruses – the ones implicated in SARS and MERS – when

the pathogen that causes COVID-19 came to the world's attention in January, Dr. Schoggins said.

In primate kidney cells, which are frequently used as models in coronavirus research, the researchers had determined that LY6E impairs the ability of the virus to fuse with host cells. If the virus is unable to fuse with those cells, it cannot initiate infection, he explained. Dr. Thiel was able to get a sample of human COVID-19 from the current outbreak and spearheaded efforts to determine if LY6E also inhibited fusion of the COVID-19 virus, finding that it does.

Meanwhile, Dr. Mar conducted experiments on the UT Southwestern mouse model exposed to murine coronavirus that showed Ly6e is critical for protecting immune cells from infection. In the absence of Ly6e, immune cells – such as dendritic cells and B cells – become more susceptible to infection and their numbers drastically decrease. This makes it harder for the immune system to fight off the infection, which worsens the disease, Dr. Schoggins said.

He stressed, however, that the mouse coronavirus used in that experiment is very different from the coronavirus in the current outbreak. One major difference: Rather than being a respiratory illness, the mouse coronavirus they studied infects the liver, causing hepatitis. Another difference: The mouse

coronavirus is usually not lethal, but for mice lacking Ly6e, it was deadly.

"In spite of those differences, it's widely accepted as a model for understanding basic concepts of coronavirus replication and immune responses in a living animal," Dr. Schoggins said. "Our study brings new insight into how critical these antiviral genes are for controlling viral infection and mounting proper immune responses against the virus. Because LY6E is a naturally occurring protein in humans, we hope this knowledge may help in the development of therapies that might one day be used to treat coronavirus infections."

The researchers conclude in their study that antiviral fusion inhibitors have been successfully implemented for HIV-1 and that a therapeutic approach mimicking the mechanism of action of LY6E could provide a first line of defense against novel coronavirus infections.

Dr. Schoggins is a Nancy Cain and Jeffrey A. Marcus Scholar in Medical Research, in Honor of Dr. Bill S. Vowell

More online: To watch a video and read the full story, which includes the full list of authors and funding support, go to utsouthwestern.edu/newsroom/articles/year-2020/protein-potently-inhibits-coronavirus.html.

FDA-approved drugs could help fight COVID-19

By Christen Brownlee

Drugs already approved for other uses could hold promise in fighting COVID-19, according to computer modeling studies done by UT Southwestern scientists. The findings, published recently on a preprint server known as *ChemRxiv* prior to peer review, could open new avenues for treating patients with this often serious respiratory condition.

Since it appeared in late 2019, COVID-19, caused by a novel coronavirus known as SARS-CoV-2, had infected more than 1.9 million patients and killed more than 130,000 worldwide as of April 16. Although several ongoing efforts exist to develop effective treatment regimens and vaccines, there are currently no clear therapeutic strategies or preventive treatments.

Developing new pharmaceutical agents that work against this virus could take months, even with rapid approval, explained Dr. Hesham Sadek, Professor of Internal Medicine and Molecular Biology. That's why he and his colleagues looked to drugs that are already approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, a strategy that's become increasingly popular in disease research.

Most drugs exert their effects by binding to specific targets in the body or on disease-causing bacteria or viruses, attaching to proteins, recep-

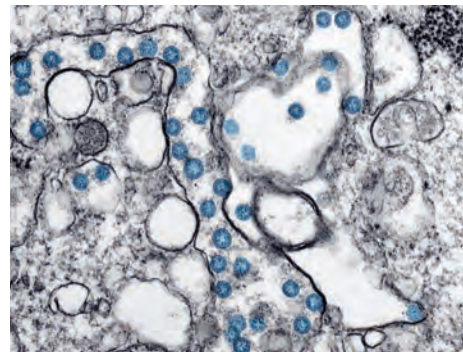
tors, or channels to alter their function. However, Dr. Sadek said, almost all drugs cause side effects due to "off-target" effects, attaching to areas that are unintended.

Dr. Sadek and his colleagues reasoned that some FDA-approved drugs might unintentionally target vulnerable parts of SARS-CoV-2. To test this idea, the group – composed of structural biologists, medicinal chemists, and others – performed a computer-based study to broadly examine which drugs might be useful against this virus.

The team focused on SARS-CoV-2's main protease, an enzyme that the virus uses to bind long strands of proteins that it directs host cells to generate for the virus' own replication and cut them into smaller pieces. Scientists elsewhere recently elucidated the structure of this enzyme, including its binding pocket. A drug that strongly attaches to this binding pocket could block its function, Dr. Sadek explained, rendering the virus unable to multiply and propagate infection.

To identify drug candidates, the researchers used a computer program that structurally matched all FDA drugs to the binding pocket. They then manually examined which drugs that fit structurally might forge strong chemical bonds with the pocket once inside.

Unsurprisingly, their top hits included several



Transmission electron microscopic image of an isolate from the first U.S. case of COVID-19. The spherical viral particles, colorized blue, contain cross-section through the viral genome, seen as black dots.

antiviral drugs, including Darunavir, Nelfinavir, and Saquinavir, which work by targeting proteases. However, the researchers also identified several candidates that fall far outside antiviral use. These included the ACE inhibitor Moexipril; chemotherapeutic agents Daunorubicin and Mitoxantrone; the painkiller Metimazole; the antihistamine Bepotastine; and the anti-malarial drug Atovaquone. One of the most promising candidates was Rosuvastatin, a statin that's sold under the brand name Crestor and is already

taken by millions of patients around the world to lower their cholesterol.

Although several candidates are probably unsuitable to give to critically ill patients – such as the chemotherapeutic agents – Rosuvastatin already exhibits a strong safety profile, is inexpensive, and is readily available, Dr. Sadek said.

Because this study was completely computer-based, he added, it's unknown if any of these candidates will actually be active against SARS-CoV-2, and additional validation studies are needed before any clinical application. But the study gives a starting point for other researchers to evaluate these drugs both in the lab and in patients.

"Repurposing these FDA-approved drugs could be a fast way to get treatment to patients who otherwise have no option," Dr. Sadek said.

Other UTSW scientists who participated in this study include Drs. Ayman Farag and Mahmoud Ahmed, both Assistant Instructors in Internal Medicine, and Dr. Ping Wang, a postdoctoral researcher in Internal Medicine-Cardiology.

The work is supported by funds from the Hamon Center for Regenerative Science and Medicine.

Dr. Sadek holds the J. Fred Schoellkopf, Jr. Chair in Cardiology.

A recipe for success: Chemists step up to make hand sanitizer

By Lori Sundeen Soderbergh

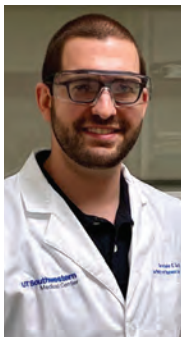
When you are running out of a product, wouldn't it be nice if you could just make more of your own?

That's what two organic chemists at UT Southwestern did when hand sanitizer fell into short supply as the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the country. Now the lab-produced sanitizer is helping keep hands germ-free for UT Southwestern caregivers and staff.

"Our Director challenged us to add to the supply chain," said Dr. Christopher Sleet. "It's a fantastic opportunity to use our knowledge to change lives."

The reaction of the two researchers to the challenge was speedy. Dr. Sleet worked with Dr. Jose Garcia-Rodriguez, both Safety Specialists II in Chemical Safety, to cook up a solution on March 13.

"Within 15 minutes, they found a way to solve the problem. Within an hour, they had made their first batch,"



Drs. Christopher Sleet, left, and Jose Garcia-Rodriguez got proactive and made hand sanitizer for UTSW to replenish short supplies.

said Patrick Conley, Director of Biological and Chemical Safety & Environmental Compliance in the Office of Safety and Business Continuity.

The chemists initially produced 24 liters of sanitizer that was divided into 750-milliliter sanitized cartridges and distributed to UT Southwestern's William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital and affiliated clinics. When

empty, the cartridges will be returned to them for a refill. The chemists are hoping to produce as much as another 400 liters.

"This is a short-term solution until the supply chain issues resolve. We will make as much as we can, for as long as we can," said Mr. Conley.

Instructions for making hand sanitizer are publicly available on the World

Health Organization (WHO) website. However, the high-grade ingredients that meet United States Pharmacopeia (USP) standards are not readily available to consumers, and safeguards must be employed in handling the chemicals.

"We're doing this to help UT Southwestern. Don't try this at home," cautioned Dr. Garcia-Rodriguez. "Without safety equipment, you could burn your skin."

The WHO recommendations include just four ingredients: ethyl alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, glycerol, and sterile distilled water. To ensure the water was sterile, the chemists used a common lab tool called an autoclave to push the temperature to 121 degrees Celsius (250 degrees Fahrenheit) in a process that kills the toughest known microorganisms.

Once combined, the solution rests for 48-72 hours to ensure that it is disinfected of any unwanted stray ingredients that may have been on the containers before distribution.

According to the WHO guidelines document, the detailed step-by-step directions were developed to help countries and health care facilities around the world produce alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Some countries that worked with the WHO as testing sites in the past include Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Egypt, Kenya, Mali, Mongolia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Spain.

Now those guidelines are helping UT Southwestern fill an urgent need during the COVID-19 crisis.

"We knew this was a way to use our expertise as organic chemists. We hope to stop the virus and prevent more cases from occurring," said Dr. Garcia-Rodriguez.

And that's a great motivation to keep cooking up more.

More online: Read the full story on *Center Times Plus* at utsouthwestern.edu/ctplus.

Nephrologist Palmer scales educational heights with prestigious Piper Professor Award recognition

By Patrick Wascovich

Dr. Biff F. Palmer, Professor of Internal Medicine, has been selected to receive the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation's 2020 Piper Professor Award, an elite honor that recognizes outstanding college professors across Texas.

Previously honored as a Distinguished Teaching Professor by the University, Dr. Palmer is the 16th UT Southwestern faculty member to receive the award, established in 1958 to highlight dedication to teaching and outstanding academic achievement. This year's recognition marks the sixth time in the past eight years that a UTSW faculty member has been so honored.

"Dr. Palmer is an outstanding choice for the prestigious Piper Professor Award," said Dr. W. P. Andrew Lee, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Provost, and Dean of the Medical School. "He excels in the breadth and variety of his educational acumen, the quantity and quality of his teaching abilities, his innovation in curriculum development, and his strong commitment to improving the quality of medical education at UT Southwestern."

Dr. Palmer, a 1981 graduate of UT Southwestern Medical School and an avid mountain climber who has ascended the Seven Summits – the tallest mountains on each of the seven continents – said his appreciation of teaching and climbing are a shared passion.

"I am so incredibly honored and so humbled that I have been able to achieve my lifelong goals," he said. "As both a medical student and faculty member at UT Southwestern, I am grateful to the many mentors who influenced my career, most notable Dr. Donald Seldin who saw in me the ability to take complex subject matter and present it in such a way that makes it understandable. I am also blessed because, like climbing Mount Everest, I have been afforded the opportunity



Dr. Biff F. Palmer's passion for teaching medical students is analogous to his mountain climbing accomplishments such as scaling Mount Everest (right).



About the Piper Professor Award

The Piper Foundation was created in 1950 by Randall Gordon Piper and Minnie Stevens Piper. In 1951, it launched a loan program that allowed economically disadvantaged students in Texas to attend college.

After the Pipers died in 1955, their Foundation initiated the Piper Scholars Program for undergraduates, the Pipers Fellows Program for graduate students, and the Piper Professors Program to recognize inspiring educators. For Professors, each university in Texas is allowed one nomination per year, with 10 being selected for recognition.

to accomplish things that I am truly passionate about. I very much appreciate the opportunity to educate and touch so many people's lives."

As part of the nomination, Dr. David Johnson, Professor and former Chair of Internal Medicine, said Dr. Palmer is uniquely qualified for this award as he has consistently made outstanding contributions in all phases of medical education since joining the faculty in 1989.

"He has been recognized locally, nationally, and internationally as an outstanding educator and has brought distinction to UT Southwestern through his accomplishments not only as a teacher and an educator, but also

through all of his academic achievements," Dr. Johnson said.

Dr. Palmer, a faculty member in the Division of Nephrology, completed his residency in internal medicine at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. He then pursued a research fellowship in nephrology at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and a clinical fellowship in nephrology at UT Southwestern-Parkland Memorial Hospital.

Returning to the UTSW campus, Dr. Palmer said, was fortuitous in his career.

"My mentors recognized my skills and worked with me to become the scholar I am today," he said. "They instilled in me that in order to really

attain knowledge, you must teach it. I had the opportunity to be exposed to some of the greatest educators of their time, and they taught me the importance of not only presenting in the classroom, but also the importance of publications and teaching through writing."

Dr. Palmer has written more than 260 articles and chapters, including four first author papers in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. He serves as an Associate Editor for the *American Journal of Nephrology* and is on the editorial boards of *Clinical Nephrology*, the *American Journal of Kidney Diseases*, and the *Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*. He served six years on the nephrology subspecialty board for the American Board of Internal Medicine.

"Throughout my career I have relied on two words – why not? I ask this of myself whenever I am challenged. This simple phrase pushes me forward and away from what might be 'comfortable.' I believe when we push ourselves into realms that are less comfortable, we are perfectly positioned to learn more about ourselves and how best to help and mentor

those around us," he said.

After more than three decades serving as a preminent UTSW teacher and mentor, Dr. Palmer strives to continuously reciprocate the energy and enthusiasm he feels and obtains from faculty colleagues and the learners around him.

"My mentors have instilled in me the importance of sharing knowledge," Dr. Palmer noted. "I am energized when I teach in education's different forms – large didactic classrooms, small groups, one-on-one mentorship, and publications. My goal is to ignite passion and enthusiasm for subject matter, thereby developing and facilitating a foundation for lifelong learning."

Dr. Johnson holds the R. Ellwood Jones, M.D. Distinguished Professorship in Clinical Education.

Dr. Lee holds the Atticus James Gill, M.D. Chair in Medical Science.

More online: Read the full story on *Center Times Plus* at utsouthwestern.edu/ctplus.

Three researchers selected as newest UTSW Endowed Scholars

By Carol Marie Cropper

UT Southwestern's latest class of Endowed Scholars in Medical Science includes researchers focused on proteins implicated in disease, new treatments for neurological disorders, and the human genome. Each Scholar will receive four years of financial support, from 2020-2023, to conduct cutting-edge research as a tenure-track Assistant Professor.

The Endowed Scholars Program, established in 1998 with \$60 million in philanthropic funds, is designed to support early career clinical or basic science research.

"The early career scientists selected for this high honor bring exciting new research projects to our campus," said Dr. David Mangelsdorf, Chair of the Endowed Scholar Committee, Chair of Pharmacology, and Professor of Pharmacology and Biochemistry. "They – and this program – contribute to UT Southwestern's culture of supporting and celebrating discovery."

Learn more about each of the Endowed Scholars in this 22nd Class in their own words:

Dr. Anju Sreelatha, Assistant Professor of Physiology W.W. Caruth, Jr. Scholar in Biomedical Research

What led to a career in research: My interest in science was sparked by my high school chemistry teachers, Brian Cook and Heather Voltz. My love for chemistry led me to pursue research in the laboratory of Dr. Warren Goux as an undergraduate sophomore and Dr. Malu Tansey as a UT Dallas Green Fellow. During this time, I realized how much I enjoyed working in a lab and found scientific research exciting and invigorating.

Research focus: I study the molecular mechanisms of selenoproteins in health and disease. Selenoproteins are a unique family of proteins that incorporate the micronutrient selenium in the form of the 21st genetically encoded amino acid, selenocysteine. Several human selenoproteins are implicated in various diseases, including cancer and cardiovascular and neurological disorders. My research aims to determine the biochemical activity and physiological relevance of selenoproteins using a multidisciplinary approach with structural biology, biochem-



Dr. Sreelatha

istry, molecular biology, and cell biology.

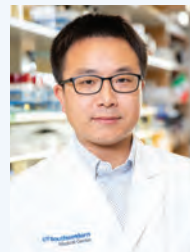
Ultimate career goal: To mentor the next generation of scientists and conduct rigorous and transformative research to understand the molecular mechanisms of disease.

Dr. Lu Sun, Assistant Professor of Molecular Biology Southwestern Medical Foundation Scholar in Biomedical Research

What led to a career in research: I was introduced to modern biology by my high school biology teacher in China. In 2002, I was lucky to be selected to compete at the 13th International Biology Olympiad for high school students and won a silver medal. I then studied biology at Tsinghua University in Beijing, where I became extremely interested in how the brain is assembled and functions. After graduation from Tsinghua, I was admitted to the Neuroscience Graduate Program at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

Research focus: The goal of my laboratory is to understand the fundamental principles governing neuron-glia interactions in health and disease. In vertebrates, including humans, nearly half of the brain cells are non-neuronal cells. Most of them are so-called glial cells, which are critical for normal nervous system function. Despite decades of research, how glial cells develop and how they communicate with neurons and other cell types remain mysteries. Our present work focuses on the cellular and molecular mechanisms underlying central nervous system myelination, the enclosure of nerve fibers in a myelin sheath. We are also interested in developing novel glia-based toolkits to better understand how the nervous system is assembled and disintegrated by glia. This will help us better characterize many neurological disorders that are associated with glial dysfunction, including white matter injury, multiple sclerosis, brain tumors, and Alzheimer's disease.

Ultimate career goal: To translate what I learn in the laboratory to medications for patients who suffer from neurological disorders. Growing evidence shows that the most abundant cells in the brain, the glial cells, are responsible for many neurological disorders. My research will provide a unique perspective to better understand the etiology and progression of these



Dr. Sun

disorders, and will eventually help us develop better medicines to combat these diseases. My other career goal is to provide a nurturing environment for the next generation of leaders in biomedical research.

Dr. Jian Zhou, Assistant Professor, Lyda Hill Department of Bioinformatics Lupe Murchison Foundation Scholar in Medical Research

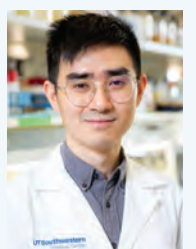
What led to a career in research: Research is an ideal job since it provides the freedom to pursue my interests while at work – I can do it all day without feeling like it is work and it is also a lot of fun. I especially like working with data and computational algorithms as that allows one to try out a high number of new ideas within hours or days, so the research can evolve very fast.

Research focus: My research area is computational genomics with machine learning and statistical approaches. Understanding how the genome operates at the sequence level is a primary focus. Even though we now know a lot about the regulatory functions of the genome, how such regulatory programs are encoded in the gene sequence and how to accurately extract such information from sequences are still new, underexplored territories. My lab aims to gain an increasingly complete understanding of genomic sequence and build a realistic "in silico," or computational, model of the genome.

Ultimate career goal: To gain a complete understanding of the genomic sequence and build increasingly realistic computer models of it. But "ultimate career goal" sounds like somewhere we will never get to or that I would stop at. So I would not say a specific research question is an ultimate goal. Doing the kind of science I am happy with is both my most basic and ultimate goal.

Dr. Mangelsdorf, a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator, holds the Raymond and Ellen Willie Distinguished Chair in Molecular Neuropharmacology in Honor of Harold B. Crasilneck, Ph.D., and the Alfred G. Gilman Distinguished Chair in Pharmacology.

Dr. Sreelatha and Dr. Zhou are Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) Scholars.



Dr. Zhou

STUDENT AWARDS



Dr. Oludamilola Akinmolayemi: Class of 2020 Leadership Award and Iatros Award

Growing up in a country with limited health care resources shaped Dr. Oludamilola "Dami" Akinmolayemi's future. It also fueled his drive to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded him in the United States. The Medical School Class of 2020 chose him to receive the Iatros Award, while the Leadership Award is bestowed annually to student officers of the graduating class.

What the Leadership Award means: "It has been an amazing opportunity and experience serving in several leadership roles here. As the Class President, I strive for excellence in advocating and community building despite the demands and challenges that come with balancing academics and extracurricular activities. This would not have been possible without the support of so many others. It is truly a humbling recognition."

Mentor comment: "There is no one more deserving of this award than Dami Akinmolayemi, who as Class President has been an incredible example of servant leadership. He is a strong advocate for his class and has made significant contributions toward improving the learning environment and services provided. Dami has played critical roles in our reaccreditation and strategic planning initiatives and has served on the UT System Student Advisory Committee. However, the most incredible example of leadership stems from his response to the COVID-19 crisis and how he handled the impact to the Class of 2020 with grace and a mature, thoughtful approach. It has been an absolute privilege to partner with such a talented leader through this difficult time." – Dr. Angela Mihalic, Dean of Medical Students and Associate Dean for Student Affairs



Dr. Oludamilola "Dami" Akinmolayemi

What the Iatros Award means: "It is truly an honor to be selected by my classmates to receive this award. It means the world to me that they think of me as a colleague who demonstrates the qualities of the type of physician that we all aspire to be. I am sure there are other incredible classmates who have gone above and beyond for their patients and community who deserve this award, however I am grateful and will always strive to live up to the expectations of the Iatros Award."

Class of 2020 student comments: "Dami is very dedicated to providing community service, in particular to underrepresented communities"; "He makes himself remarkably accessible, because his goal is truly to help everyone in every way he can"; "He is genuinely caring, often reaching out to promote and ensure the well-being of his peers. This compassion extends to his patients. He displays a steady confidence in the context of exemplary professionalism, respect, and kindness."

Background and family: "I was born and raised in Lagos, Nigeria, but I have lived in the Dallas-Fort Worth area since I was 19. I call Texas my home state. I am grateful for the opportunities that have been provided to me, as I am the first in my family to graduate with a bachelor's degree."

What led to your career path: "There is limited access to health care services in Nigeria, and it is not uncommon for people to die there from illnesses that could be easily treated if more resources were available. My personal experiences and the difficulties encountered by those in my community to obtain health care services fueled my decision to pursue a career in medicine."

College: "I received an associate degree from North Lake College in Irving, then transferred to UT Arlington, where I graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Science. At North Lake, I was a member of the Student Leadership Institute and was inducted into Phi Theta Kappa. At UTA, I was inducted into the Golden Key International Honor Society and served as its Director of Community and Education Service. I also was active in the Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students."

UTSW activities: "In addition to volunteering at student-run free clinics, I participated in a medical mission trip to Guatemala. I served as the Community Clinics Outreach Chair for United to Serve; as Chair of the Multicultural Week Lecture Series Committee; as Community Service co-Chair for the Student National Medical Association; as a Cary College Senator; and as mentor for the yearly Health Professions Recruitment and Exposure Program. I also was a member of the Class of 2021 PRE+OP planning committee."

Surprising fact: "I do not know how to swim. As a kid, I always chickened out every time I had the opportunity to learn."

Future plans: "I will be starting my internal medicine residency in July at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Irving Medical Center, with a plan to pursue a fellowship in cardiology. I would like to pursue clinical outcomes research, using knowledge gained through receiving my Master of Public Health degree with a focus in epidemiology. I also hope to be involved in leadership roles, with an interest in health care administration."

About the awards: The Leadership Award annually goes to the student officers of the graduating class and includes a shared \$1,000 award. The Iatros Award – Iatros is the Greek word for "physician" – was established by the UT Southwestern Medical School Class of 1984 to honor a graduate who most emulates the complete qualities of a physician. The Iatros Award carries a cash prize provided by the Alumni Association.

Dr. Anita Vasudevan:

U.S. Public Health Service Excellence in Public Health Award, William F. Ross, M.D.,
Scholarship Award in Family Medicine, and Endocrine Society Medical Student Achievement Award

Dr. Anita Vasudevan entered college knowing she wanted to be a physician but found her passion for public health as a UT Austin peer health educator. Ultimately, she wants to be a family physician who is involved in community health and an advocate for health equity. Her exceptional dedication has led to three awards. Her next milestone is a residency in family medicine at Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital in California.

What the USPHS Award means: "Throughout medical school, it became increasingly clear to me that a healthy lifestyle begins outside of the doctor's office. For me, this award validates that medicine and public health are not totally separate fields, and that being a good physician means more than just knowing which drug to prescribe."

Mentor comment: "Anita is truly deserving of this award. She masterfully integrated her interests in community health and social justice with clinical training by successfully completing the M.D./M.P.H. dual degree with UTHealth School of Public Health in Dallas. She is a rising star and I am confident she will make a tremendous impact in improving primary care and population health in our nation." – Dr. Bijal Balasubramanian, Associate Professor and Regional Dean at UTHealth School of Public Health in Dallas

What the Ross Award means: "I have admired the family medicine faculty since my first year of medical school, and they served as incredible mentors to me. I am so honored to receive this award from the people I've looked up to!"

Mentor comment: "Anita will graduate with an M.D./M.P.H. and also completed the CART (Community Action Research Track) Program. During the summer of 2017, Anita participated in the Community Health Fellowship Program and her research work, 'Taxpayer Cost of Adolescent Childbearing in Dallas County, Texas,' made a real impact for her partner organization NTARUPT. The

next step in her community-based research was 'Child Brides: Sociodemographic Factors, Health Variables, and Attitudes Associated with Marrying Before 18 Years Old in the United States' during her three-month research Scholarly Activity. The final arm of research was done during the Community Medicine Elective and covered 'Sociodemographic Factors and High-Risk Behaviors Associated With Child Marriage.'" – Dr. Nora Gimpel, Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine and Vice Chair for Community Health

What the Endocrine Society Award means: "As a future primary care physician, I am interested in taking care of all patients, including those who identify as transgender, and I know this is something the Endocrine Society also values. I am very humbled to be selected for this honor."

Mentor comment: "The faculty were very impressed with Anita's performance on the Transgender Medicine elective. She asked excellent questions and was clearly very interested in learning. In addition, she has shown great initiative in a research study that she is spearheading to assess other students' knowledge about transgender health care to help devise a curriculum." – Dr. Jessica Abramowitz, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine and Associate Director of the Endocrinology and Metabolism Fellowship Program

Background and family: "I grew up in Missouri City, Texas, with my parents, older brother, and maternal grandmother. Growing up in a home with my grandmother shaped me immensely. She was born in a village in India in 1930, and she did not have the opportunity to stay in school for very long. Before my brother was born, she came to the United States to help my parents take care of him, and she ended up staying with us for the rest of her life. I think often about the kind of courage and love it would take to leave the only home you have ever known for an unfamiliar country in which you barely speak the language to help raise your grand-



Dr. Anita Vasudevan

children. I try to channel her bravery and strength when I am feeling anxious about the future, traveling somewhere new by myself, or speaking up about things that matter."

What led to your career path: "In medical school, I spent my first summer doing the Community Health Fellowship Program through the Family and Community Medicine Department. I was so excited to find a specialty that focuses not only on the patient, but also on the social determinants of health and the community. During my family medicine clerkship, I loved how the residents and attendings had built such close and meaningful relationships with their patients, and I was sold on family medicine!"

College: "I graduated from UT Austin in 2016 with a Bachelor of Science in biology honors. I was

involved in biochemistry research that focused on identifying inhibitors for enzymes involved in causing infectious disease. On the public health side, I was involved in my school's peer health educator program, where I got to promote healthy living on campus."

UTSW activities: "I have been a part of United to Serve since the first year of medical school and a Chair on the Prizes & Donations Committee for the last three years. I am also an officer for our Family Medicine Interest Group, and I have helped plan workshops, created a podcast about being a family physician, and managed our social media accounts. I also started my own organization, the Southwestern Alliance Against Food Insecurity (SAAFI), that volunteers with organizations around the community."

Surprising fact: "My fiancé and I actually grew up in the same neighborhood, so we have known each other since we were about 8 years old!"

Future plans: "I want to be a full-spectrum family physician who also continues to be involved in community health. I would love to work for a federally qualified health center or in a similar setting because working toward health equity is so important to me. I hope to also do health equity and advocacy work at a systems level."

About the awards: Administered by the U.S. Public Health Service Physician Professional Advisory Committee, the Excellence in Public Health Award recognizes medical students who have positively impacted public health in their communities. The Ross Award, named after the Chair of Family and Community Medicine at UT Southwestern from 1984 to 1993, includes a \$1,000 scholarship from the Dallas Chapter of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians Foundation. The Endocrine Society Award is bestowed upon a medical student who has done significant research in endocrinology.

Dr. Micah Nishigaki:

William F. Ross, M.D., Scholarship Award in Family Medicine



Dr. Micah Nishigaki

For as long as she can remember, Dr. Micah Nishigaki has always been captivated by science and health. As a medical student, she never met a specialty she didn't love, and she found family medicine to be the perfect combination of the best parts of all of them – full-spectrum health care across all ages. Dr. Nishigaki, who matched at UT Southwestern for her residency, is one of this year's winners of the William F. Ross, M.D., Scholarship Award in Family Medicine.

What this award means: "I'm honored that my hard work has been noticed by someone. It's a really great feeling."

Mentor comment: "Micah has an infectious smile and tremendous can-do attitude. She has the kind of personality that patients will find highly endearing, and I have no doubt she will develop a cadre of patients who will refuse to see any other

physician except her." – Dr. Dan Sepdham, Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine

Background and family: "I was born in Tokyo and moved to San Antonio when I was 5 years old. I was mainly raised by my single, immigrant Japanese mother, who worked tirelessly to help my sister and me get to where we are today."

What led to your career path: "I have been fascinated by science and the human body since I was a wee lass, and medicine is an awesome intersection of these subjects. Throughout my medical school journey, I realized I liked a little of every specialty and caring for patients from all backgrounds and ages – family medicine seemed like the perfect fit! I'm so glad to be part of the family."

UTSW activities: "I was involved in the Family Medicine Interest Group, served as a UTSW peer mentor for MS1s, volunteered at various free clinics and culinary medicine classes, and participated in 'The Vagina Monologues.'"

Surprising fact: "I get scared very easily! I sleep with a colorful nightlight on."

Future plans: "I'm very passionate about health and wellness, and I hope to emphasize the importance of this to my patients, especially with a focus on nutrition/culinary medicine."

About the award: Named after the Chair of Family and Community Medicine at UT Southwestern Medical Center from 1984 to 1993, the Ross Award includes a \$1,000 scholarship from the Dallas Chapter of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians Foundation.

Dr. Oliver Taylor:

Minnie Lancaster, M.D., Scholarship Award in Family Medicine



Dr. Oliver Taylor

Growing up in a big family, Dr. Oliver Taylor saw firsthand how illness affects not just an individual but a whole family. In family medicine, he found a specialty in which he can positively impact patients as well as their whole circle of loved ones. Dr. Taylor, winner of the Minnie Lancaster, M.D., Scholarship Award in Family Medicine, will begin his medical career with a residency at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth.

What this award means: "This award is meaningful because it recognizes the importance of family medicine in a culture that downplays the importance of primary care."

Mentor comment: "Oliver Taylor is an outstanding graduate and future family physician who has been active in the Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) and the UTSW Medical Student Procedures elective. He and Anita Vasudevan started and completed multiple interviews with family

physicians for the FMIG podcast, which brought a lot of student interest and energy to the FMIG. He has been a tireless champion and advocate for expanding the UTSW family medicine rotation to six weeks and presented his research results about this to the UTSW Clerkship Curriculum Committee and the Academic Deans. He is married and is the proud dad of two young kids." – Dr. Tamara McGregor, Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine and Internal Medicine

Background and family: "I grew up in Utah in a large family. I'm the first person in my family to go to medical school, but my mom and four of my sisters are nurses. My wife and two daughters are the best thing about my life."

What led to your career path: "I learned from experiences with disease in people close to me that an illness affects not just the individual but their whole family. I wanted to join a specialty that was not limited by imposed boundaries – where I could help not just the person, but a person's whole social group in innovative ways. Family medicine gives you the training and the freedom to do that in a unique way."

UTSW activities: "I served as Vice President of the Family Medicine Interest Group, an AVID Officer, and Women's Health Elective Officer."

Surprising fact: "I enjoy baking homemade bread."

Future plans: "I want a rural family practice that includes pediatrics, obstetrics, and time spent in emergency medicine."

About the award: The award honors Dr. Lancaster and her husband, Dr. Edgar Lancaster, who in 1953 opened the Grapevine Clinic and Hospital, the first clinic in Grapevine and the forerunner of Baylor Scott & White Medical Center at Grapevine.

Dr. Alex Guinn:

Texas College of Emergency Physicians Award



Dr. Alex Guinn

Since his early high school days, Dr. Alex Guinn has found it edifying to work with those in need. Following his father into medicine, he found his passion in emergency medicine and is the recipient of this year's Texas College of Emergency Physicians Award. His next challenge is completing a residency in his specialty at UT Southwestern.

What this award means: "It reminds me that I have been the tremendous beneficiary of the many people who have supported me throughout this process, including my amazing wife and better half, my ever encouraging brother and parents, and the UT Southwestern Emergency Department, particularly Drs. Mary McHugh and Christine Kulstad, who repeatedly offered career path advice and helped me navigate the hurdles associated with pursuing a career in EM."

Mentor comment: "Alex is a humble, hardworking student whose academic excellence is equaled by his work giving back to the community." – Dr. Christine Kulstad, Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine and Clerkship co-Director

Background and family: "I was born here in Dallas and lived the majority of my life in Frisco. My wife and I have actually known each other since middle school, but we did not become friends until late into undergraduate education. We finally started dating, deciding it was inevitable when we both ended up at UT Southwestern

for medical school, and we were married in December 2018. My younger brother was my best man. My mom and dad still live in Frisco, and we see them regularly."

What led to your career path: "Given that my father was a physician, hearing how he drew satisfaction in the intellectual challenge and how he believed he was making a difference daily in the lives of his patients, I knew with a fair amount of certainty upon graduating from high school that I would one day become a physician as well. I initially pursued pediatrics. However, I ended up enjoying every patient population I worked with, not just those under age 19, and felt I had to broaden myself a little. Therefore, since I happened to have quite a bit of exposure to the field of emergency medicine through the pediatric EM research that I had done, I made the easy decision that this was the best path for me."

UTSW activities: "I have been involved as a class Senator, representing one-sixth of the 2020 student body and serving as a Colleges curriculum liaison to the UT Southwestern Medical School Deans. I have also been involved with United to Serve, the Pre-OP Camp for incoming medical students, and the student-run Union Gospel Mission Calvert Smoking Cessation Clinic."

Surprising fact: "I absolutely love board and card games. My brother and I spent many summers growing up playing games, and even into college we still played card games together and with friends. My wife and I carry on this tradition. Our living room ottoman is fully occupied with an ongoing game of The 7th Continent."

Future plans: "I would like to pursue a career as a full-time emergency medicine physician working in a hospital setting. Down the road, I see myself becoming involved in education at the medical student level, and although it may be a bit ambitious at this stage, I feel as if I would be able to serve the medical community well as the Dean of a medical school."

About the award: The award is presented to a medical student who demonstrates excellence in emergency medicine, with special dedication to Texans who need emergency care.

Dr. Smriti Prasad:

Award for Excellence in Dermatology



Dr. Smriti Prasad

The daughter of primary care physicians, Dr. Smriti Prasad came to UTSW knowing she wanted to pursue a career in public and community health. She uncovered her passion for dermatology while volunteering at the Agape Clinic and is the recipient of this year's Award for Excellence in Dermatology. She matched at Oregon Health & Science University for her residency.

What this award means: "I've been interested in dermatology since my first year of medical school after volunteering at the Agape Dermatology Clinic. Since that time, my journey has led me to discover so many aspects of dermatology and research that I previously had little knowledge about, and through my mentors, I've completed and published work in public health and clinical research. This award feels like a culmination of my journey to this point and stands as a testament to the amazing guidance I've received here at this institution."

Mentor comment: "I have known Smriti since her first year of medical school. I am so proud of the enormous growth of this talented young woman. Simply put, Smriti combines an extraordinary work ethic with intelligence, compassion, and dedication to rural underserved communities. She will be a credit to our specialty." – Dr. Heidi Jacobe, Associate Professor of Dermatology

Background and family: "My parents and I are all first-generation immigrants from India. I moved to America when I was 3 years old. I have a brother

who is eight years younger than me, but despite the age difference, is also one of my best friends. I consider my role as an older sister to be one of my most cherished responsibilities. (In fact, my brother is the maid of honor at my wedding!)"

What led to your career path: "I am from a small, isolated town in West Texas. Both of my parents are physicians, so from an early age, I grew up listening to their stories as primary care doctors in our town. I often heard about health care disparities and problems with access to care in our community. Originally, I was considering following my parents' path in internal medicine, but after my experiences at the Agape Clinic, I quickly realized dermatology was a fertile field for me to pursue my interests. I've since worked to complete my M.P.H. and conducted a public health project that took me back to my hometown, where I was able to study the melanoma mortality gap between rural and urban communities through fieldwork."

UTSW activities: "I was a College Senator in Seldin College, President of the Dermatology Interest Group, a publicity officer in the V-Day student organization, a member of the GHHS Community Engagement Committee, a flautist in the UTSW student orchestra, a Pre-OP Counselor, a Colleges Peer Mentor, and a choreographer, photographer, dancer, and member of the Organization Committee of the Multicultural Show and Week."

Surprising fact: "When I came to medical school, I originally had no plans to pursue research. However, through my experiences and the mentorship I received, I've grown to love what I do, and can't imagine not continuing the work I've started down the road!"

Future plans: "While in medical school, I've done work in public health and autoimmune skin conditions, and in residency, I hope to determine how best to apply my background to further define a niche for myself that will set up my career. Many years down the road, I hope to use my M.P.H. background to be involved in some policy work in health care."

About the award: The award is given to a UT Southwestern graduating medical student who has advanced dermatological patient care, research, or teaching in a special way, or who shows promise for leadership in these areas. The recipient receives a certificate and \$1,000.

Dr. Heather Renfro: Society for Academic Emergency Medicine Award



Dr. Heather Renfro

Dr. Heather Renfro developed a passion for giving back to the community at a young age. Then as a preteen, she fell in love with the STEM fields and knew she wanted a career in science. To have the best of both worlds, she concluded by eighth grade, she needed to become a physician. Dr. Renfro, the recipient of this year's Society for Academic Emergency Medicine Award, is next headed to an emergency medicine residency at the University of Chicago Medical Center.

What this award means: "I am honored to receive such a prestigious award from the Department of Emergency Medicine. It is a wonderful feeling to be recognized for the work I have done over the years, both academically and in extracurriculars. I am very hardworking, motivated, and, most importantly, I truly love my patients and my community."

Mentor comment: "Heather is a caring and motivated student who is driven by a passion to advocate for the disenfranchised." – Dr. Christine Kulstad, Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine and Clerkship co-Director

Background and family: "I am from Houston. My mother, Jamie Dooley-Renfro, is a chemistry professor at Madison High School and Texas Southern University. My father, Michael Renfro, is a defense, accident/injury, and family attorney. My brother, Omar Renfro, is an arms specialist in the Navy in California."

What led to your career path: "Growing up with a mother who is a chemist and father who is an attorney, education has always been a priority. I was afforded the opportunity to attend DeBakey High School for Health Professions, Loyola University New Orleans, and UT Southwestern Medical School. I initially came to medical school wanting to be a surgeon. However, the more I was exposed to the different specialties, the more I realized how much I loved the acuity of every disease process. Furthermore, I continued to lead community-based organizations in underserved areas. I realized that my love for acuity and my community and my desire to advocate for all patients came together beautifully as an emergency physician."

UTSW activities: "I've served as a Chair for the Gold Humanism Honor Society, the United to Serve health fair, and the Student National Medical Association; as an officer of the Future Doctor Pipeline Program, Adolescent Health Advocates, and the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Interest Group; as a speaker for the American Heart Association 'STEM Goes Red'; and as a singer in the Lymph Notes."

Surprising fact: "I am a member of the Yelp Elite Society (YES), reviewing local establishments for the community. We promote new businesses, explore old ones, and receive monthly perks for our feedback. Basically, I am a foodie and I get rewarded for eating!"

Future plans: "I see myself in academics after I complete my residency training. I want to focus on social emergency medicine, ultrasound, and/or global health."

About the award: The award is given annually to a senior medical student for demonstrating excellence and commitment to emergency medicine.

Dr. Kevin Vu: Karen Kowalske Outstanding PM&R Undergraduate Award



Dr. Kevin Vu

Dr. Kevin Vu's natural curiosity and resultant determination led him toward an unexpected path: physical medicine and rehabilitation. Dr. Vu is the 2020 recipient of the Karen Kowalske Outstanding PM&R Undergraduate Award, which recognizes a UTSW medical student who demonstrates empathy, compassion, maturity, and inquisitiveness.

What this award means: "I'm incredibly honored to receive this award. When I started my medical career, one of the items on my 'bucket list' was to throw myself into research and learn more about the whole publication process. This whole journey in research and PM&R has taught me so many things, and I'm humbled to be recognized for the work that I've done. As the first physician in my family, this recognition means so much to me and gives me more motivation to continue my work."

Mentor comment: "Kevin is one of the best students I have ever worked with. He took a paper of mine that was rejected and revised it and got it accepted. He has unceasing energy and a passion for patient

care and research." – Dr. Karen Kowalske, Professor of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

Background and family: "My parents, both computer engineers, are first-generation Vietnamese immigrants who settled down in Texas. I was born in Cedar Park. I also have two younger brothers."

What led to your career path: "I've always been interested in how injury and pain affect almost every aspect of patients' lives. I hadn't heard of PM&R until my first year of medical school, but soon realized that it really encompassed what my idea of medicine was: purely patient-focused with an emphasis on functioning in daily life outside of the hospital. The burn patient population here at UTSW was of interest because of the severity of their injuries. I took a lot of opportunities to shadow the great burn researchers here."

UTSW activities: "I served as a PM&R Student Interest Group Officer and was on the United to Serve games committee. I also was President of the Salsa Club."

Surprising fact: "I really enjoy social dancing of all types (salsa, swing, two-step, etc.). I play a lot of strategy-type video games, and I'm a huge fan of Formula One racing. I also love baking and cooking. I'm really into hip-hop and used to produce music in college. I was a DJ for my own small radio segment, as part of the college radio station at UT Dallas."

Future plans: "I hope to get more involved in the field of PM&R, especially in burns. I would really like to bring and create more modalities for controlling pain in these patients, and I've recently become more curious about the possibilities of regenerative medicine in PM&R. First and foremost, I'd like to focus on finishing my PM&R residency, which will be at Harvard Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital in Massachusetts."

About the award: Started in 2011, the award is named in honor of the Department's past Chair, Dr. Kowalske. The recipient receives a plaque and a \$250 gift certificate.

Dr. Sharon Sun: MT "Pepper" Jenkins Outstanding Medical Student Award in Anesthesiology and Pain Management



Dr. Sharon Sun

Dr. Sharon Sun did her best to keep an open mind throughout medical school, but before orientation even began, her heart was set on becoming an anesthesiologist. Her compassion, scholarly achievements, and leadership skills make her an ideal choice for the MT "Pepper" Jenkins Outstanding Medical Student Award in Anesthesiology and Pain Management. Her next achievement will be to complete a residency in this specialty at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center.

What this award means: "It means so much to me to receive this award from people I admire in the Department of Anesthesiology & Pain Management because it shows that they recognize my work ethic and passion for the field. I'm truly humbled that they see so much potential in me and I will continue to strive for excellence going forward."

Mentor comment: "Sharon exemplifies all of the attributes that defined Dr. Jenkins – in particular, compassion for her fellow man and a knack for leadership." – Dr. Charles Whitten, Professor and Chair of Anesthesiology & Pain Management

Background and family: "I was born in Pennsyl-

vania and raised in Houston. My parents are from Shanghai. Their unconditional love and support have been invaluable to me throughout this journey, and I am very proud to be the first doctor in my family."

What led to your career path: "I came across anesthesiology during my gap years while deciding if I was suited for a career in medicine. Once I learned more about the tremendously broad knowledge base, rapid critical thinking, and procedural skill set necessary in a diversity of acute care settings along with the opportunity to provide long-term care to patients with chronic pain, I knew that anesthesiology would provide the intellectual challenge and variety I desire in a lifelong career. My experiences in medical school on clerkships and working with the wonderful faculty and residents here have confirmed that it is the ideal fit for me."

UTSW activities: "I have been heavily invested in the Anesthesiology Student Interest Group, serving as an officer. It has been extremely gratifying to help connect students with anesthesiologists so that they can learn more about the specialty, regardless of their level of experience with anesthesiology or their stage of training."

Surprising fact: "My favorite place in Dallas is the Katy Trail. I painted a scene of one of my favorite spots near Victory Park using oils and a palette knife."

Future plans: "I plan to pursue a fellowship in pain management and hope to stay in academia, practicing both in the OR and clinic, with a focus on clinical research and innovation."

About the award: The award recognizes students seeking careers in anesthesiology who excelled at UTSW Medical School, take an empathetic approach to patient care, and exhibit the characteristics of leadership, scholarship, and thirst for knowledge exemplified by the late Dr. M.T. "Pepper" Jenkins, who established and served as Chairman of the Department of Anesthesiology and Pain Management from 1948 to 1981.

Dr. Kasey Kreutz: Roland C. Reynolds Pathology Award



Dr. Kasey Kreutz

Pursuing a career in medicine seemed impossible for Dr. Kasey Kreutz, but serving her country led to a new way for her to help others. Dr. Kreutz is the 2020 recipient of the Roland C. Reynolds Pathology Award, given to a graduating medical student whose actions demonstrate care and giving.

What this award means: "I am honored to have been chosen to receive this award. The Pathology Department at UT Southwestern has been incredibly influential throughout my medical school training, from offering small group pathology sessions to providing numerous opportunities for students to get involved in research and education."

Mentor comment: "Kasey Kreutz has exemplified service to others, integrity and compassion, the qualities embodied in the person and career of Dr. Reynolds and which this prestigious award recognizes. Her activities have included a quality improvement project at the Dallas County Medical Examiner's office, trauma response trainer for the 'Stop the Bleed' program, judge team captain for the Dallas Regional Science and Engineering Fair, and student mentor for the Health Professionals Recruitment and Exposure Program for high school students. It is a privilege to honor her with

this award." – Dr. Charles Timmons, Professor of Pathology

Background and family: "I grew up in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. After college, I joined the U.S. Navy, where I took advantage of opportunities to teach and mentor fellow sailors. The military's strong emphasis on teamwork is something I would like to bring with me into my future career."

What led to your career path: "I have always been interested in biology, public health, and epidemiology. Medicine seemed like an ideal way to merge these interests into a rewarding career, but the cost of medical school posed an intimidating hurdle. After completing an enlistment in the U.S. Navy, I realized that medical school would be financially feasible with the aid of the GI Bill and the Hazlewood Act. These benefits opened a path for me to pursue a career in medicine, a dream that I otherwise would have been too hesitant to seriously consider."

UTSW activities: "As co-President of the Infectious Disease Interest Group at UTSW, I coordinated shadowing opportunities and guest lectures to introduce fellow students to a subspecialty of Internal Medicine that we are rarely exposed to during our clinical clerkships. During medical school, I also worked as a pathology tutor for the School of Health Professions, and as a teaching assistant for the Microanatomy course offered to first-year medical students. Additionally, I volunteered at UTSW's many student-run free clinics, educating patients about health concerns, performing physical exams, and checking blood pressure and blood glucose."

Surprising fact: "I originally wanted to be an archaeologist."

Future plans: "I intend to complete my residency training in pathology at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in Missouri. I would like to work at an academic center where I could continue to be involved in medical student education."

About the award: The award, which includes \$1,500, honors the late Dr. Reynolds, a UT Southwestern alumnus and faculty member remembered as a gifted pathologist and a generous person.

Dr. Nathan McCammon: Vernie A. Stenbridge Scholarship Award in Pathology



Dr. Nathan McCammon

Dr. Nathan McCammon went his own way in a family heavily skewed toward a different kind of science. "My parents have often said that they have no idea how I got into medicine as opposed to engineering, but they are happy to support me." Dr. McCammon, set to begin his residency at the University of Michigan Hospitals, is the 2020 recipient of the Vernie A. Stenbridge Scholarship Award in Pathology.

What this award means: "This award is meaningful to me because it is an affirmation that I have chosen the right specialty. I have sought out as much experience as possible, and I attempted to vary this experience and supplement it with research within the field. It is humbling to be recognized for my passion, and I hope that I can carry this passion on through residency."

Mentor comment: "Nathan McCammon has demonstrated a long-standing interest in pathology and translational medicine. He has had a distinguished performance in a number of research projects, including working in therapeutic oncology to determine the effects of specific gene knockouts on downstream proteins and in hematopathology on a medical review of specific hematolymphoid

neoplasms and their associated gene mutation. The Pathology Department is proud to recognize him as the recipient of this award." – Dr. Kathleen Wilson, Professor of Pathology

Background and family: "I am the second son of two engineers. My mother got her first degree in petroleum engineering and returned to college for a degree in computer science. My father got his degree in electrical engineering. My older brother got his degree in computer science. My wife is finishing up her Ph.D. in counseling psychology and should graduate this coming August. We also added two puppies to our family during medical school."

What led to your career path: "I came into medical school without knowing what I wanted to specialize in. Throughout my clerkships, I tried to keep an open mind and explore each option. After being exposed to a pathology elective, I could not find any other specialty that compared to it. Every additional elective within pathology after my first was simply confirmation that it was the field for me."

UTSW activities: "I have been actively involved in research since my second year of medical school. Since I have worked with Assistant Professor of Pathology Dr. Flavia Rosado, I have been involved with two different projects that are nearing submission for publication. I presented one of these projects as a poster at USCAP, a national pathology conference."

Surprising fact: "I have been a vegetarian since fifth grade."

Future plans: "I plan to explore the various subspecialties pathology has to offer. Most residents in pathology today seek one or two fellowships after residency. I am a blank slate at this point and am simply looking forward to exploring my options in residency."

About the award: The award was established by friends and colleagues of Dr. Stenbridge, the former UTSW Pathology Chair who died in 2000. The \$1,500 award is given to the most outstanding medical student whose performance in the sophomore pathology course was exemplary and who is interested in a pathology career.

Dr. Sarah Yuen: Hudson-Penn Award for Excellence in Surgery



Dr. Sarah Yuen

Dr. Sarah Yuen knew what her career path would be from a very young age, but a medical outreach trip while in high school helped to sharpen her focus and expand her horizons. Dr. Yuen, who matched at UC Irvine Medical Center, is the 2020 recipient of the Hudson-Penn Award for Excellence in Surgery.

What this award means: "This award is meaningful to me because it represents my family and all the mentors who have supported me. I have already been so blessed to learn from excellent surgeons here at UT Southwestern and to be surrounded by outstanding peers who have pushed me every day. To then receive this award as a female first-generation Asian-American and the first person in my family to pursue a career in medicine is the highest honor."

Mentor comment: "Sarah was selected for the Hudson-Penn Award because she possesses the personal attributes and academic qualifications that epitomize excellence in surgery. She is an intelligent, hardworking, goal-oriented, and compassionate individual who will make an outstanding surgeon." – Dr. Rohit Sharma, Assistant Professor of Surgery

Background and family: "My dad was born in Hong Kong and my mom in Malaysia, and both immigrated to the United States to pursue college educations. I was born in Plano, but spent most of my childhood in Phoenix, Arizona. My sister, who is four years younger than me, is my best friend. My family is extremely close, and we love to travel, play tennis, and eat delicious food together."

What led to your career path: "I wanted to make a difference in the world and thought that a career as a physician allowed me to fulfill that calling. As a high school student, I was given the life-changing opportunity to travel with a surgical team to the Dominican Republic. After seeing the impact of surgery on the lives of our patients amid poverty and disparity, I knew that this was the specialty that would best equip me to help those less fortunate. In addition, I hope to promote the field of global surgery, increasing access to surgical care for underserved populations around the world."

UTSW activities: "I was a volunteer chair and later a co-Director for United to Serve, an initiative creating a free community health fair. I also was a participant in and leader on spring break mission trips to Sarstun, Guatemala, and served as an editor of *Home & Abroad*, a student-run and -written global health magazine."

Surprising fact: "Despite growing up in Arizona, I am a die-hard Cowboys fan thanks to my dad, who fell in love with 'America's Team' when he lived in Dallas during the glory years."

Future plans: "I plan to pursue a career in academic surgery and to do research aimed at reducing health disparities and assessing health outcomes to further the field of global surgery."

About the award: The award, established in 1979, is named for Dr. Lee Hudson, Chief of surgery at Parkland Memorial Hospital when UT Southwestern was founded, and for Robert Penn, Dr. Hudson's brother-in-law.

Dr. Alexandra Pottorff: Kurt Ian Wey, M.D., Senior Pediatric Award



Alexandra Pottorff

A college internship at a crisis center helped Dr. Alexandra Pottorff find her true calling in the medical field. "I have always been amazed by the resiliency of children, and I loved working with them," said Dr. Pottorff, who will head to a residency at Boston Children's Hospital after graduation.

What this award means: "I was so very honored to receive this award for several reasons. It is special because of the memory of the individual it honors. I feel so privileged to be a part of this legacy. I have so much respect for the faculty and members of our Pediatric Department at UT Southwestern, and to be selected by them for this award is extremely meaningful."

Mentor comment: "Alex is a gem. She is the embodiment of humanistic medical care. I've had the pleasure of working side by side with her in clinical care environments, as well as counseling her about her career plans, and she has consistently demonstrated a passion for addressing systematic inequities impairing health care delivery that really sets her apart from her peers. She is well on her way to becoming a leader in whatever field of pediatrics

she wishes to go into." – Dr. Soumya Adhikari, Associate Professor of Pediatrics

Background and family: "I was born in Ogden, Utah, but my family moved to Texas when I was pretty young. I grew up in Crowley. My parents are both mechanical engineers, and my younger brother is completing his M.P.A. at UT Austin. I am the first person in my family to go to medical school."

What led to your career path: "I knew I liked science, and I'm also a people person. I had never considered medicine until my last year of high school, when I got to tour a children's hospital and meet some doctors. Then it clicked for me. The medical field is an amazing intersection of science and human experience. While interning at a crisis center for victims of domestic violence and their children, I worked mainly with the children. This is when I first became interested in pediatrics."

UTSW activities: "I am a dual-degree M.D./M.P.H. student, and I really enjoyed learning to integrate public health into everyday medicine. I was a founding officer of the student organization Southwestern Alliance Against Food Insecurity (SAAFI). I also helped create the Food for Thought podcast to increase student awareness about food insecurity."

Surprising fact: "I love to watch scary movies."

Future plans: "I am not fully decided on what field of practice within pediatrics I want to pursue, but I am looking forward to getting more experience. I know I want to incorporate public health and population health in my future career."

About the award: The award recognizes a fourth-year medical student who shows empathy and compassion for sick children, has significant knowledge, and maintains a good sense of humor. Dr. Wey was a 1998 UT Southwestern graduate who died in a car accident. The award is established by family and friends to honor his life.

Dr. Daniel Beauchamp: Pediatric Society of Greater Dallas Award for Excellence in Pediatric Medicine



Dr. Daniel Beauchamp

Dr. Daniel Beauchamp's path to pediatrics followed a rather unconventional route, but in retrospect, made perfect sense. "My undergraduate training in electrical engineering has given me opportunities to participate in multiple imaging-related research projects, and I am excited to see how my electrical engineering background might fit into my future practice." Dr. Beauchamp is the 2020 recipient of the Pediatric Society of Greater Dallas Award for Excellence in Pediatric Medicine.

What this award means: "I am very humbled and grateful to be given this award, since it represents patient-centered values that are critical to being a good doctor. I am eager and excited to start my pediatrics training, and I hope that I will always treat my patients and their families with the values this award represents."

Mentor comment: "I think probably long before he ever decided to become an electrical engineering major, Daniel had a deep-rooted desire to simply understand things. We are just lucky that those interests eventually steered him toward the field of pediatric heart diseases. He is a humble, self-driven

learner with boundless curiosity, and I have no doubt that he will be a superb physician." – Dr. Soumya Adhikari, Associate Professor of Pediatrics

Background and family: "My wife, Terri, and I have a baby daughter, Hannah. Terri and I are both from Alabama originally. My dad is a general internist and runs a solo practice in my hometown."

What led to your career path: "My initial exposure to medicine was through my father. However, my decision to pursue medicine as a career was not cemented until college, as I volunteered heavily at a local low-cost clinic and spent time shadowing various specialties."

UTSW activities: "I am involved in Southwestern Christian Fellowship (SCF), and I went on two SCF spring break mission trips to El Paso. I have participated in research in the departments of Radiology, Pediatric Cardiology, and Pathology. I have tutored students on campus, and I led an Alpha Omega Alpha committee called Step Up to Integrated Medicine, which hosted monthly case discussion sessions for first-semester medical students."

Surprising fact: "I had never been to Texas prior to my interview at UT Southwestern; however, I do have a personal connection to Texas history. My mom's side of the family is allegedly related to William Travis from the Alamo."

Future plans: "I will be starting my pediatrics residency at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center this summer. After residency, I plan to specialize in pediatric cardiology. I love the complexities of congenital cardiology and the opportunities this field provides to work with sick kids and their families as they try to navigate the many anxieties associated with a congenital cardiac diagnosis."

About the award: The award recognizes an outstanding graduate who has the personal character and dedication to serve, as well as be an advocate for, children.

Dr. Amy Luu: TAFP Dallas Chapter Outstanding Graduate Award



Dr. Amy Luu

Dr. Amy Luu started thinking about becoming a physician at age 5. Realizing that dream was the result of a "village effort" of hard work, tireless support from family, teachers, and mentors, and a healthy dose of privilege and luck, said this year's winner of the TAFP Dallas Chapter Outstanding Graduate Award. She next heads to a family medicine residency at McLennan County Family Medicine in Texas.

What this award means: "I don't take for granted any bit of the support and resources that have led to me getting to where I am today and being able to pursue family medicine, and that includes the help that comes from this award. It truly does mean a lot to me that someone offered this award as a meaningful expression of their belief in my and others' potential to change the world, and I am so appreciative of that encouragement."

Mentor comment: "Amy Luu completed the CART (Community Action Research Track) Program and gave 157 hours – double the required amount – of her time for service learning activities. She also served as President of the Family Medicine Interest Group and was able to meet her goal of earning a Distinction in Community Health. Her thesis topic was 'Church leaders' perceptions of teen pregnancy in their community.' Amy is hardworking, depend-

able, and organized, as is evidenced in her achievements during medical school." – Dr. Nora Gimpel, Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine and Vice Chair for Community Health

Background and family: "I was born in Texas, but I lived much of my childhood in South Korea before moving back to the U.S. in late elementary school. Ethnically, my family is Vietnamese and most of my cultural traditions stem from that background. I love that I am able to draw from the richness of perspectives from all three of these different cultures, which very much informs the person I am today. My family is in Arlington, where I've lived for most of my life with my dad, mom, and two brothers."

What led to your career path: "My leanings toward medicine came from the combination of an innate drive to nurture and form long-term relationships with others, a fascination with science and the human body, and a normal human desire to relieve suffering. However, my true commitment to medicine – and particularly family medicine – was solidified by my own family medicine doctor, who has demonstrated to me the importance, meaning, and power that comes with being a health partner and advocate for your patients and community every step of the way for their entire lives."

UTSW activities: "I was President and Vice President of the Family Medicine Interest Group, Clinic Operations Manager at the Monday Clinic, an American Academy of Family Physicians Student Membership Ambassador, and a UTSW Texas Academy of Family Physicians Liaison. I also volunteered with United to Serve and the North Texas Alliance for Reducing Unintended Pregnancy in Teens."

Surprising fact: "I was home-schooled for some time in elementary school!"

Future plans: "I particularly feel called to dedicate my life to underserved communities that need care the most, and I feel strongly about being involved in the larger picture of community health in order to better understand and address the many facets of an individual's well-being. I am also excited to be a more comprehensive resource for the communities I both serve and am a part of by practicing full-spectrum family medicine and including obstetrics in my future practice."

About the award: The TAFP (Texas Academy of Family Physicians) Outstanding Student Award is given by the Dallas Chapter to one student annually.

Dr. Hayley Williams: Annelle M. Ahmed, M.D. Women's Health Care Award



Dr. Hayley Williams

A love of science coupled with the desire to help others made the medical field a natural choice for Dr. Hayley Williams. Add to these a strong family legacy of community service and a fortuitous rotation, and her path became clear. Dr. Williams is the 2020 recipient of the Annelle M. Ahmed, M.D. Women's Health Care Award, given to a student who demonstrates exemplary women's health care and epitomizes the clinician that Dr. Ahmed was – caring, intelligent, and involved in her community. After graduation, she heads to a residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Ohio State University Medical Center.

What this award means: "It is an absolute honor to be given this award. I am inspired by the things I have read about Dr. Ahmed's intelligence, compassion, and service; I hope to be able to be the kind of doctor that she was as I enter the next phase of my career."

Mentor comment: "Hayley is an extraordinary student and physician. She maintained a 4.0 GPA while also providing compassionate and personalized patient care. Hayley has worked closely with the Dallas community as a United to Serve coordinator and as a researcher with the Moncrief Cancer Institute and the Southwestern

Women's Surgery Center. She is well-respected by her peers and the Ob/Gyn Department as a whole. Hayley's dedication to women's health and enthusiastic attitude make her truly exceptional." – Dr. Alicia Kiszka, Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology

Background and family: "Service to the community was a central tenet of my upbringing. Mom and dad are both retired Dallas Police officers, and we also served as a foster family while I was growing up. My parents emphasized to me and my siblings that it was important to try to make the lives of the people around us a bit better in whatever way we could."

What led to your career path: "As a former collegiate athlete, I thought that sports medicine or orthopedics might be the way to go, but when I rotated through Labor and Delivery, I knew that was the place I wanted to be. I have always been my best self when I have a team around me, and cheering patients on as they delivered with a whole team of nurses, doctors, and family felt like home."

UTSW activities: "I participated in HPREP as a mentor for two years and have been a peer mentor with the Colleges program. This year, I was able to help teach pelvic exams to MS2s."

Surprising fact: "My freshman year at Rice University, I played soccer against Alex Morgan, who is now a famous athlete who plays for the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team. Our team did not win, but I do have a picture of me and Alex next to each other from that game."

Future plans: "A residency in Ob/Gyn! I would love to be able to teach as part of my career and to share the joy and excitement that has been shared with me by so many wonderful mentors."

About the award: The award is given in honor of Dr. Annelle M. Ahmed, a UT Southwestern Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology faculty member who died of breast cancer at age 39.

Dr. Wesley Smith: John D. McConnell Award for Excellence in Urology



Dr. Wesley Smith

Dr. Wesley Smith credits sage advice from a family member as a guiding force throughout his academic life – and life in general. "My grandpa used to say, 'The one thing you can always control is outworking everyone in the room.' I have applied this principle to everything I do." Dr. Smith is the 2020 recipient of the John D. McConnell Award for Excellence in Urology.

What this award means: "I am deeply honored to receive this award and grateful for all the UTSW Urology faculty. I have pursued excellence in whatever I do, and the McConnell Award embodies this concept. After meeting Dr. McConnell on the interview trail at Wake Forest, it is truly an honor."

Mentor comment: "Wes was a truly stellar student in a fantastic group this year from UTSW. His tremendous work ethic, ability to integrate smoothly and effortlessly into the clinical team, and his dedication to putting patient care above all else make him an outstanding choice for the McConnell Award." – Dr. Gary Lemack, Professor of Urology and Neurology and Neurotherapeutics

Background and family: "My parents are both math

teachers, and I have two brothers. Some of my favorite memories include family reunions with 100-plus individuals showing up. My parents and grandparents taught me that you should always work your hardest, stay humble, and respect others. I want to thank my wife, Lynnsee, and my family for their continual support and helping me follow my dream."

What led to your career path: "Upon entering college, my goal was to become a professional soccer player. But Nebraska Wesleyan University required classes in all subjects, and I fell in love with science. It was not until my junior year in college, after having a heart surgery, that I was introduced to the field of medicine. I was impressed by the intellectual demand and the emotional intelligence that medicine required. Also, the team in the operating room felt like a soccer team. Upon entering medical school, I did not know much about urology, but after being exposed in my third year, I knew it was the right choice for me."

UTSW activities: "I served as President of the PIG Health Club and as AOA Committee Chair for Step Up to Step 1. I also was a Texas Pediatrics Society Medical Student advocate, a SASS tutor, a United To Serve Website Committee Chair, and a soccer player on the men's league competitive team."

Surprising fact: "I love woodworking and renovating houses. I plan to buy a house with my wife before residency and renovate it before my internship starts. One goal I have is to build a house from the ground up."

Future plans: "I have been accepted as a urology resident here at UTSW and I am excited to work at UTSW for the next five years. As of now, a fellowship in oncology or endourology is interesting to me."

About the award: The award honors Dr. McConnell, a former UTSW faculty member who once led Urology from a Division into a Department. He is now Executive Director of Wake Forest Healthcare Ventures in North Carolina, which develops and commercializes health care products and services.

Dr. Ali Tejani: Vanatta, Hesser, Schmalstieg Excellence in Tutoring Award



Dr. Ali Tejani

Dr. Ali Tejani has a deep love for educating others, the passion for teaching and mentoring that he inherited from his parents. "The opportunity to teach my fellow medical students has been a blessing, and I have learned much from them." Dr. Tejani, who matched at UT Southwestern for his radiology residency, is the 2020 recipient of the Vanatta, Hesser, Schmalstieg Excellence in Tutoring Award.

What this award means: "I see it as a privilege to help students maneuver through the curriculum, overcoming hurdles that I faced myself when I was in their position. There is no greater satisfaction than seeing students master difficult concepts and apply what they learn to caring for patients on the wards."

Mentor comment: "Since the day he joined Student Academic Support Services in 2017, Ali has been a joy to work with and is the embodiment of every quality we seek in our tutors. He combines expert content knowledge, creativity, humility, and a real dedication to the success of his students into every tutoring session." – Carol Wortham, Student Academic Support Services Manager

Background and family: "My mother and father grew up in Pakistan, where my mother worked as a schoolteacher. My father left everything behind, including his family, to pursue higher education in the United States in a completely unfamiliar environment. During his studies, he took time to mentor and teach his fellow students. My mother continues to work as a teacher in Dallas. Together, they inspire me to continue this tradition of giving back through one's time and knowledge."

What led to your career path: "During medical school, I enjoyed almost every class that we took, and my radiology subinternship helped me realize that radiologists draw on each of these fields daily. Also, I have always been passionate about the intersection of technology and medicine, and radiology is the perfect fit for these interests."

UTSW activities: "I was fortunate to work as a tutor for anatomy and various pre-clerkship organ system blocks. Through Alpha Omega Alpha, I was able to help MS2 students prepare for Step 1. Through the Monday Clinic, I served as an Operations Manager to help with clinic flow and logistics, while providing free care to uninsured patients in Dallas."

Surprising fact: "My wife and I met on the first day of medical school orientation at UTSW!"

Future plans: "I hope to pursue a career in radiology and imaging informatics. My goal is to work at an academic center where I can be involved with both undergraduate and graduate medical education. Hopefully, I also will be able to dedicate time to helping with global health efforts in increasing access to imaging and imaging reports. Teaching will continue to be a significant responsibility of my new role."

About the award: The award recognizes graduating medical students who have made outstanding contributions to serve fellow medical students in need of academic assistance.

Dr. Vijay Agusala: Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award



Dr. Vijay Agusala

With an interest in finance, Dr. Vijay Agusala originally had no plans to follow his parents into medicine – but their compelling stories changed his mind. He soon discovered his business knowledge could be a powerful asset for addressing health care disparity and accessibility. By taking a gap year to earn his MBA, Dr. Agusala is now equipped to follow his passion for helping others through medical practice and policy reform. He is one of this year's recipients of the Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award.

What this award means: "It is humbling to be recognized among so many exceptional colleagues. My years as a medical student at UT Southwestern have been extremely rewarding, and I have been fortunate to have met and worked with many excellent clinicians and compassionate role models. I hope to emulate the standard they have set as I continue my training as a resident physician."

Mentor comment: "I met Vijay after he completed his MBA at UT Dallas. His education, focus, and vision will propel him to become an outstanding physician leader. His interests in health policy and outcomes research are well suited for his goal of a leadership role in an academic setting. Vijay's

dedication to patient care is inspiring, and I look forward to hearing of his future success." – Dr. Debra Weinberger, Assistant Professor of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery and Pediatrics

Background and family: "I grew up in Odessa, Texas, as the son of two physicians. While initially I never wanted to follow in their footsteps and planned to pursue a career in finance instead, hearing about their impactful and fulfilling professional experiences changed my mind and encouraged me to apply to medical school. Looking back, it was definitely the right decision for me. Now my sister is a first-year medical student."

What led to your career path: "Growing up in rural Texas, I saw many barriers to health care accessibility hinder patients from receiving adequate medical care. I wanted to educate myself about both clinical medicine in medical school as well as about large-scale health care principles in business school so that I could be an effective patient advocate both in and out of the health care setting."

UTSW activities: "Since the first year of medical school, I have been involved in various research projects with mentors in the Division of Cardiology. I also am a member of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society."

Surprising fact: "I took a year off between my third and fourth years of medical school to complete an MBA at UT Dallas. I hope to use the skills I learned to be a physician leader in the changing health care environment."

Future plans: "I plan to complete my family medicine residency at UT Southwestern alongside my wife and hope to pursue a fellowship in cardiology afterward. Long term, I would like to remain in academic medicine and pursue my interests in health policy and outcomes research."

About the award: The award is given annually to one or more graduating medical students who excel academically during clinical rotations and who exhibit an interest in and compassion for patients.

Dr. Tyler Couch: Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award



Dr. Tyler Couch

Dr. Tyler Couch grew up captivated by the stories his grandfather – a general practitioner in rural Oklahoma – told about caring for patients with medical and social challenges. At UT Southwestern, Dr. Couch discovered internal medicine as a field in which he can care for complex problems across diverse organ systems and disciplines. He is one of this year's recipients of the Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award. His next challenge is to complete an internal medicine residency at Duke University Medical Center in North Carolina.

What this award means: "I am unbelievably grateful to be one of the recipients of the Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award. The qualities that this award recognizes – clinical excellence and compassion – are two of the characteristics that I most admire in the physician role models that I have had here at UT Southwestern."

Mentor comment: "Tyler is one of the most impressive students I have ever met. He has a humble and authentic approach to addressing the human spirit in responding to the physical needs of patients. Tyler is curious, genuinely kind, and 'wicked smart.' It's been a true honor to serve as his mentor. He embodies all the best characteristics that physicians aspire to." – Dr. Shawna Nesbitt, Professor of Internal Medicine and Associate Dean of Student Affairs in

the Office of Student Diversity and Inclusion

Background and family: "I grew up in Norman, Oklahoma, where my father worked as a high school educator and my mother worked for a sports-based nonprofit organization. My sister works in finance in Dallas. I met my wife of two years, Ashley, as a sophomore at Baylor University, and she is now a dietitian at William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital."

What led to your career path: "When I rotated on the internal medicine wards as a third-year student, I discovered teams of internists addressing complex obstacles to patient health, all while demonstrating a commitment to the compassionate presence that had been prevalent throughout my grandfather's stories that I loved as a child. I was hooked and decided to pursue a career in internal medicine as a way to put down roots at this intersection of medical complexity and compassionate patient care."

UTSW activities: "I worked to develop a session for preclinical students on coping with patient death and co-created and led an elective course on medicine and religion. I have also participated in global health trips to Peru, served on the school's LCME Educational Standards Self-Study Subcommittee, and am a member of Alpha Omega Alpha. Additionally, I spent a year between my third and fourth years of medical school exploring the relationship between faith and medicine as a Theology, Medicine, and Culture Fellow at Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina."

Surprising fact: "During my free time as a fourth-year medical student, I have stumbled into woodworking in my garage. So far, I've managed to build a stool, a bench, and most of a dining room table without getting hurt or having any furniture fall apart."

Future plans: "My interests are broad and include cardiology, palliative care, and general internal medicine. After residency and possibly fellowship, I hope to practice in an academic setting with a focus on clinical education and a continued exploration of the intersection between religion, medicine, and ethics."

About the award: The award is given annually to one or more graduating medical students who excel academically during clinical rotations and who exhibit an interest in and compassion for patients.

Dr. Janice Jiang: Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award



Dr. Janice Jiang

Watching her grandmother suffer from lack of access to health care inspired Dr. Janice Jiang to pursue a career in medicine, where she could become a strong advocate and make the greatest direct impact for underserved patients. She is one of this year's recipients of the Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award. Next up is heading to an internal medicine residency at Stanford University Programs in California.

What this award means: "I'm so humbled and honored to be recognized among such an amazing group of peers. I hope to always be the type of physician that this award embodies – competent, compassionate, and always putting my patients first."

Mentor comment: "Janice is the consummate professional and has consistently maintained this approach throughout her medical education – she is honest and direct, principled and organized, confident and humble, and not 'swayed by the crowd.' She is a model for her classmates on persistence and forward-thinking. She is book-smart, socially aware, and unfailingly honest – exactly the type of physician needed in internal medicine." – Dr. Angela Orino, Associate Professor of Internal Medicine

Background and family: "I was born in Dallas at the old St. Paul University Hospital to two hardworking

immigrant parents from Wuhan, China. I spent my early childhood in China before coming back to the States and finishing elementary, middle, and high school in the DFW area. I also have a little brother who is an aspiring computer scientist and a wonderful, loving husband who has been my constant source of support throughout medical school."

What led to your career path: "I was raised by my maternal grandparents for a large part of my early childhood. When my grandmother was diagnosed and ultimately passed away from liver cirrhosis, watching her suffer because of lack of access to health care made me want to become a doctor who could advocate for patients like her in the future."

UTSW activities: "I spent a lot of time volunteering at Union Gospel Mission's Center of Hope shelter for single women with children. I served as a free clinic manager my first year at UGM. As a second-year student, I became a Schweitzer Fellow, and I implemented a mindfulness-based stress reduction and a positive parenting class at the Center of Hope shelter. In addition, I've volunteered for three consecutive years on the Southwestern Christian Fellowship El Paso spring break mission trip and served as a clinic team leader as a third-year medical student. I am also a member of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society and was selected to be one of the 2019-20 co-Presidents of AOA's UTSW Gamma Chapter, where I helped organize events, select members, and oversee our eight wonderful subcommittees."

Surprising fact: "My husband and I were both UT social dance TAs in college – that's how we met – and we've used our skills to help choreograph four (and counting) wedding dances for our close friends!"

Future plans: "I plan to become an internal medicine doctor who is a clinician, educator, and clinical researcher. I want to use my skills, training, and passions to directly impact patient lives, to train future generations of clinicians, and to continue to improve how medicine is practiced nationally and even internationally."

About the award: The award is given annually to one or more graduating medical students who excel academically during clinical rotations and who exhibit an interest in and compassion for patients.

Dr. Lawrence Wu: Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award



Dr. Lawrence Wu

Dr. Lawrence Wu's immigrant parents benefited from safety net programs when they first arrived in the U.S., and they taught their son the importance of giving back whenever possible. Through them, Dr. Wu feels a deep indebtedness to care for all – particularly the underserved. He is one of this year's recipients of the Dr. Richard Mays Smith Award.

What this award means: "I love the culture of service and community engagement at UT Southwestern. Practicing compassionate and holistic medicine is a key goal of mine as a physician, and I look at many of my Internal Medicine mentors as role models. I am honored to be recognized in this way as I believe it reflects the tremendous support from my family, friends, and mentors."

Mentor comment: "Lawrence has shown prodigious talent and a remarkable work ethic. He won the President's Service Award three years in a row and last year was elected as the Gold Humanism Honor Society President. He is a natural leader with a servant's heart." – Dr. Reeni Abraham, Associate Professor of Internal Medicine and co-Director of the Internal Medicine Clerkship

Background and family: "My parents immigrated from

China to New York shortly before I was born. I was raised in Long Island, New York. I met my wife, Ashley, in medical school, and she is going into pediatrics. Together, we plan to holistically serve our broader communities."

What led to your career path: "Through my parents, I feel a deep indebtedness to care for all, particularly the underserved. I have found a tremendous sense of gratification and excitement in serving these populations. I was particularly drawn to the field of internal medicine because I believe that I could best care for these patients holistically while also contributing to the broader field through contributions in research, medical education, and mentorship."

UTSW activities: "I loved my medical school experience at UT Southwestern, particularly for its culture of service and collaboration. I served as Director of DFW Hepatitis B Free, partnering with many community and religious organizations to screen for viral hepatitis in the DFW area. I enjoyed serving as a student manager of the Agape Dermatology Clinic and a clinic team leader for the Southwestern Christian Fellowship El Paso medical mission trip. I was also co-President of the Gold Humanism Honor Society and a member of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society."

Surprising fact: "I enjoy acrylic painting and my favorite subject to paint is anthropomorphisms – animals with human features. I also went to the same elementary school as Jerry Seinfeld, which may explain my sense of humor."

Future plans: "I am excited to begin training at the Osler Medical Residency at Johns Hopkins Hospital. I plan to practice in an academic medical center that cares for a large underserved population similar to Parkland Memorial Hospital. I am inspired by my many mentors and their willingness to teach the younger generation of physicians. I hope to give back similarly through research, medical education, and mentorship."

About the award: The award is given annually to one or more graduating medical students who excel academically during clinical rotations and who exhibit an interest in and compassion for patients.

Dr. Shailavi Jain: Hemphill-Gojer Award in Internal Medicine



Dr. Shailavi Jain

Dr. Shailavi Jain said internal medicine provides the best opportunity to get to know patients as their primary provider. During her internal medicine rotation, she led an end-of-life discussion with a patient and family during his hospital stay. "Afterward, I felt that my input had been critical in helping the family realize their values and achieving the best outcome for my patient," said Dr. Jain, winner of this year's Hemphill-Gojer Award in Internal Medicine. She matched at UCLA Medical Center for an internal medicine residency.

What this award means: "At UT Southwestern, I have been privileged to learn from such distinguished internal medicine faculty and incredible residents. They have shown me what it means to truly understand your patients and connect with them to improve their lives. I aspire to become an amazing internal medicine physician like them, and receiving this award from the physicians I feel embody the spirit of internal medicine is incredibly humbling."

Mentor comment: "Shailavi Jain is the perfect recipient for the Hemphill-Gojer Award in Internal Medicine. From very early in her medical school career, Shailavi expressed an interest in internal medicine, and that interest never wavered, but grew stronger and stronger with each clinical experience. She is kind, compassionate, capable, and conscientious –

all of the things that make a great physician." – Dr. Amy Woods, Associate Professor of Anesthesiology & Pain Management and Director of Medical Student Education

Background and family: "My father is a hematologist/oncologist in Denton and my mother is an quality/reliability engineer. I have a sister who is majoring in health informatics at Texas Woman's University."

What led to your career path: "Growing up, everyone asked me if I wanted to be a doctor like my father. I didn't want people to think I was going into medicine because my father was a doctor, so I always said no. Then, I went to the Texas Academy of Math and Science for 11th and 12th grade and I realized I loved understanding the complexities of biology, participating in medical research, and supporting patients through their difficult times during volunteering activities. It turned out I did want to become a doctor, but for my own reasons. I decided to go to Rice University, as that allowed me to volunteer at the Texas Medical Center and participate in research at UT MD Anderson Cancer Center."

UTSW activities: "I served as Oncology-Hematology Medical Society co-President and Shadowing Coordinator, UTSW American Medical Women's Association Vice President of Community Service and Mentorship, co-President of the UTSW Institute for Healthcare Improvement chapter, Pritchard College Senator, an orientation adviser, United to Serve booth coordinator, and Multicultural Week Speakers Committee Chair."

Surprising fact: "I am a third-degree black belt in taekwondo."

Future plans: "I plan on completing my internal medicine residency and then subspecializing in gastroenterology. I would also like to continue to participate in quality improvement endeavors because QI challenges us to understand the utility of tests and medications we order, appreciate our patients' perspectives, and provide the highest standard of care possible."

About the award: The award, presented to the top medical student in internal medicine, was established by Ross H. and Anne Seymour Hemphill in honor of their son and daughter-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. Seymour Hemphill; their daughter and son-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. Bernard Gojer; and Anne Hemphill's parents, E. Clyde and Florine Allen Seymour. Dr. Hemphill and Dr. Gojer are both UTSW Medical School alumni.

Dr. Sahar Noorani: American Academy of Neurology Medical Student Prize for Excellence in Neurology



Dr. Sahar Noorani

An early interest in the intricacies of the nervous system led Dr. Sahar Noorani on an educational quest that has blossomed into a career. "In high school, I conducted research on peripheral neuropathy. My love for neurology has continued to grow since that time." This unwavering focus is one reason that Dr. Noorani, who matched at UT Southwestern for her residency, is the 2020 recipient of the American Academy of Neurology Medical Student Prize for Excellence in Neurology.

What this award means: "I am deeply honored to receive this award, as it reminds me of my duty to continue to be invested in the best possible care for my patients. I am grateful for the immense support and dedication from the faculty and residents in the Department of Neurology and Neurotherapeutics during my time at UT Southwestern. I hope I can do this award justice by maintaining the highest level of integrity and excellent care for my future patients in residency and beyond."

Mentor comment: "Sahar began working with me and Dr. Mohamed Shabana, a neurology resident, on a research project examining autoimmune epilepsy at Parkland Memorial Hospital. She is incredibly

bright, enthusiastic, committed to the care of patients, and active in charitable work. I know she will make an excellent doctor and neurologist and wish her all the very best. Sahar is an outstanding candidate for this award." – Dr. Rohit Das, Associate Professor of Neurology and Neurotherapeutics

Background and family: "I was born and raised in Houston, Texas. My parents have served as incredible role models for my siblings and me. I am excited to be the first physician in my family and serve my community."

What led to your career path: "In medical school, I was intrigued by the diagnostic capability of the neurological exam and our ability to localize pathology based on our patients' clinical presentation. My neurology rotations at UT Southwestern further fueled my desire to serve patients with challenging neurological diagnoses in my future career."

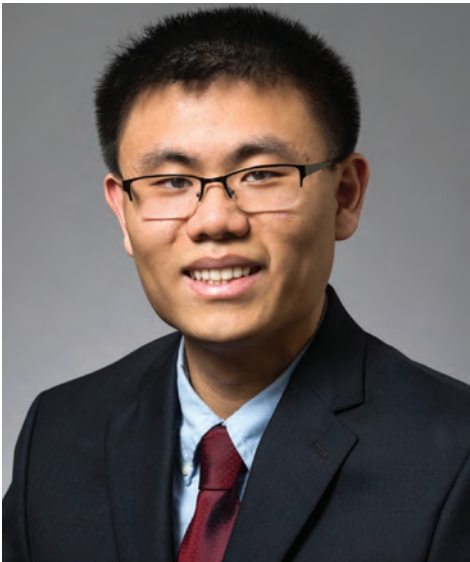
UTSW activities: "Early on, I volunteered with the Dallas-area free clinics and HANDS (Helping Augment Neonatal Development). Later, I led the Humans of Parkland committee through the Gold Humanism Honor Society."

Surprising fact: "My husband and I met on the first day of medical school orientation at UTSW."

Future plans: "After residency, I would like to complete a headache medicine or neuro-ophthalmology fellowship. Also, I plan to work in an academic setting, where I can pursue my passion for teaching alongside my clinical duties. In addition to serving the local community, I hope to provide aid to international communities through global health initiatives addressing neurological pathology and access to care."

About the award: The award is presented to a graduating medical student who has promising career potential in neurology as determined by faculty and residents.

Dr. Chengxi 'Vincent' Li: North Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians Award for Outstanding Medical Student in Psychiatry



Dr. Chengxi "Vincent" Li

From singing in a cappella groups and playing jazz music to traveling on mission trips, Dr. Chengxi "Vincent" Li is a man of varied interests that complement his dedication to providing caring, high-quality treatment for people experiencing mental illness. Dr. Li, who will stay at UT Southwestern for his psychiatry residency, is the 2020 recipient of the North Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians Award for Outstanding Medical Student in Psychiatry.

What this award means: "Compassionate patient care, evidence-based psychiatry, and dedication to improving individual and community mental health are values that have been modeled by the excellent psychiatrists at UT Southwestern. This award represents these values and reminds me to continually strive for them as I progress through residency and beyond."

Mentor comment: "This award recognizes Vincent's terrific performance in every aspect of his psychiatry education. We have all been deeply impressed with his dedication to compassionate patient care, his mission to treat patients with mental illness, and his zeal for learning the evidence base of psychiatry. We are excited to follow Vincent's

contributions to psychiatry and our patients as his career moves forward!" – Dr. Adam Brenner, Professor of Psychiatry

Background and family: "The most essential components of my background: Christian, Chinese-American, and musician. My parents are former physicians and have always been very supportive of my journey in medicine."

What led to your career path: "Throughout my life, I've been fortunate to be surrounded by caring family members and Christian communities. In college, I developed an academic interest in neuroscience and behavior while becoming personally invested in people experiencing mental health struggles, through friendships and community involvements. During medical school rotations, I found that I most enjoyed listening and talking to patients, getting to know them beyond their illnesses. I also gained awareness of the need for increased education and reduced stigma surrounding mental illness in my Chinese-American community. These factors, among others, have led me to desire a career that will afford me the privilege of addressing deep-seated suffering in often-marginalized individuals."

UTSW activities: "I served on leadership teams in the Southwestern Christian Fellowship, including its annual El Paso medical mission trip; the DFW Hepatitis B free screening group; Healthy Living; and the Geriatrics Interest Group. My musical involvements included the Lymph Notes a cappella group and M-Cats jazz band. I was also a member of the Gold Humanism Honor Society and Alpha Omega Alpha."

Surprising fact: "People often say that I speak with a Southern twang, and they usually suspect that I'm from Texas. I'm not complainin'!"

Future plans: "Following residency, I may pursue a fellowship in addictions or consultation-liaison psychiatry. I hope to practice in an inpatient setting at an academic medical center where I can engage in medical education and research."

About the award: The Psychiatric Physicians Award honors a student for excellent work in psychiatry and mental health.

Dr. Muhammad Harirah: Rohrich Family Excellence in Plastic Surgery Award



Dr. Muhammad Harirah

An aptitude for art and design since childhood coalesced into a career for Dr. Muhammad Harirah after a fortuitous lunch meeting on campus. Dr. Harirah, who will stay at UT Southwestern for his plastic surgery residency, is the 2020 recipient of the Rohrich Family Excellence in Plastic Surgery Award.

What this award means: "I'm truly honored to receive this award, and even to be considered for the award is really humbling. While I'm very proud of my achievements thus far, I believe this award reflects the sacrifices that my family, close friends, and mentors have made for me over the years. I don't think I could have even been considered for this award if it weren't for them."

Mentor comment: "Dr. Harirah is a great example of how hard work, dedication, and focus can create opportunities for everyone and anyone. We believe Muhammad has the aptitude and attitude to be a leader in the field. In fact, we were very excited to learn just a few days ago that he matched in our residency program. We are looking forward to being part of Muhammad's education as a physician, surgeon, and leader – being part of his journey." – Dr. Shai Rozen, Professor and Vice Chair of Plastic Surgery and Medical Student Director

Background and family: "I was born in Brooklyn, New York, after my parents emigrated from Egypt for my father's residency and fellowship training in obstetrics & gynecology and maternal-fetal medicine, respectively; my mother completed her training as a veterinarian back in Egypt. I am the second of five children. Two siblings are also in the medical field, one in health care administration and one as a third-year medical student here at UTSW."

What led to your career path: "For me, art, design, and thinking creatively have been integral parts of my personality since I was a child. When I arrived at UTSW, I knew early on that my love for anatomy would lead me to surgery. I serendipitously attended a lunch meeting for the Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery Interest Group, where Chair of Plastic Surgery Dr. Jeffrey Kenkel was speaking. I immediately saw the similarities in our interests. He connected me with Dr. James Thornton, Professor of Plastic Surgery. I was in sheer awe at the creative and detailed lengths he would go to in order to restore a sense of normalcy to patients' lives. Plastic and reconstructive surgery seemed like the perfect fit for me."

UTSW activities: "I've had leadership roles with the Cardiology Interest Group and Simulation Interest Group. I've also volunteered with No One Dies Alone (NODA), an organization that supplies an end-of-life companion for terminal patients without family or friends at their bedsides. I also participated in the (SPAM) Comedy Troupe and the annual Multicultural Show."

Surprising fact: "Aside from dancing and boxing, I absolutely love baking and cooking. I made my first chocolate souffle using a fork from the dining hall to whip the meringue, which took almost 45 minutes."

Future plans: "I hope to practice and teach at an academic institution, where I can be involved in developing medical student and resident curricula, as well as be a part of research."

About the award: The award recognizes a student who demonstrates superior dedication and achievement in research and clinical work. It was created to honor Catherine and Claude Rohrich – the parents of former Department Chair Dr. Rod J. Rohrich.

Dr. Rachel Shober: Eliot Goldings Award in Rheumatology



Dr. Rachel Shober

As a future family practitioner, Dr. Rachel Shober maintained an interest in rheumatology throughout her pre-clerkship classes and took the Rheumatology elective to improve her understanding of diseases she will likely see as a primary care provider. This year's winner of the Eliot Goldings Award in Rheumatology, she begins her medical career with a family medicine residency at Tacoma Family Medicine in Washington state.

What this award means: "I completed the UTSW Rheumatology elective in the fall of 2019 and I am honored to receive the Eliot Goldings Award in Rheumatology. The ways in which rheumatology patients present at Parkland Memorial Hospital and the Dallas Veterans Affairs Medical Center are incredibly complex, and I enjoyed working up these 'mystery' cases. I also appreciate the detailed histories that rheumatologists take from patients and found talking to patients during this elective course especially fun."

Mentor comment: "Rachel did a great job during her month on the Rheumatology consult service. She carried a significant load of patients and created evidence-based plans for her patients' care while taking complete ownership of their rheumatology management." – Dr. Elizabeth "Blair" Solow, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine

Background and family: "I grew up in Monroe, a rural town in western Washington state. My mom has been a family medicine doctor in Monroe for nearly 29 years, and my dad is a happily retired ex-Microsoft and Boeing manager who switched to being a full-time, stay-at-home dad when I was in fourth grade. My brother lives in San Francisco but will be starting medical school in the fall."

What led to your career path: "I watched my mom form wonderful relationships with her patients as a family medicine physician. I am a 'people person' through and through, and I take great joy in getting to know and understand others. After college, I moved to Texas and worked as a sixth grade teacher and coach for three years before deciding to apply to medical school. Teaching and family medicine actually have many parallels, and I enjoyed all of my rotations in medical school. The combination of all these factors made family medicine an easy choice for me."

UTSW activities: "I volunteered with a variety of clubs such as the Health Professions Recruitment and Exposure Program (HPREP), Medical Students For Choice, and Southwestern Alliance Against Food Insecurity. During the fall of my fourth year, I helped teach second-year medical students how to perform pelvic exams and I worked as a tour guide for Medical School applicants. I am a member of the Family Medicine Interest Group and the Gold Humanism Honor Society. I enjoy playing intramural volleyball, basketball, flag football, and ultimate Frisbee."

Surprising fact: "I love to read and write, and in another life I think I would have enjoyed being a food writer for *The New York Times*."

Future plans: "I hope to practice full-spectrum family medicine at a federally qualified health center after residency."

About the award: The award, presented to the most outstanding medical student in rheumatology, is named for Dr. Eliot A. Goldings, a former Division of Rheumatic Diseases faculty member who died in 1988. Dr. Goldings distinguished himself as a scholar, teacher, and clinician.

Dr. Benjamin Bleiberg: Herbert S. Salomon, M.D., Class of 1967, Memorial Scholarship Award



Dr. Benjamin Bleiberg

Background and family: "I was born and raised in Topeka, Kansas, where my father, a psychiatrist, and my mother, a social worker, met during residency. I grew up as the youngest of three brothers and at age 10 moved to Houston along with the clinic at which my parents were on faculty. I feel very lucky to have parents and siblings who are the best role models, teachers, and supporters I could ever hope for."

What led to your career path: "I have always found myself most motivated in supportive, team-oriented environments. The field of internal medicine allows me the chance to work with patients to identify their goals and coordinate with a team of physicians to improve their quality of life and take ownership of their health. This opportunity to connect not just with my patients, but with a team of health care professionals with multiple areas of expertise to manage a wide range of conditions is what I believe makes internal medicine such a rewarding and dynamic specialty."

UTSW activities: "I was a co-President of the Student Interest Groups in Hematology/Oncology and Psychiatry and a tutor in the Hematopoietic System course. I've been involved in United to Serve's Carnaval de Salud, and I am a member of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. I have served as a Peer Mentor, a Wellness Center Peer Advocate, and an Inspire Mentor to UT Arlington's Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students. I've also been involved in intramural sports and QI and clinical research projects in the fields of aging, cardiology, neurology, and oncology."

Surprising fact: "In college I also minored in Russian literature in translation, and I enjoy reading about and exploring Eastern European history and culture."

Future plans: "I will begin residency in internal medicine this summer with plans to continue my clinical research interests and pursue a fellowship in hematology/oncology. My goal is to continue to develop my clinical skills and to become an effective team leader."

The son of mental health professionals, Dr. Benjamin Bleiberg learned early on the importance of paying attention to the multitude of factors that shape us. He chose a career in medicine because he wanted to help people in a holistic fashion. Dr. Bleiberg, who is headed next to an internal medicine residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, is the winner of this year's Herbert S. Salomon, M.D., Class of 1967, Memorial Scholarship Award.

What this award means: "As someone who hopes to pursue a career in oncology, I am honored to receive this distinction named after a physician who had the perseverance, determination, and grit to complete medical school and internship despite a rare and ultimately untreatable cancer diagnosis. Additionally, I am grateful to Dr. Salomon's family for keeping his legacy alive and supporting the ongoing clinical, research, and educational missions of this institution that have shaped my medical education."

Mentor comment: "Ben is very personable, extremely intelligent, and humble. He has an insatiable curiosity for knowledge and solving problems that will benefit his patients. I am extremely happy he was chosen to receive the Salomon Award." – Dr. Kehinde Odedosu, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine

About the award: The award recognizes a UT Southwestern medical student who demonstrates excellence in internal medicine. It is named after Dr. Herbert Salomon, who graduated from UT Southwestern in the 1960s and died shortly after graduation.



Dr. Lee will conduct the presentation of the candidates.



2020

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

UTSouthwestern
Medical School

Online: To watch the video of the 2020 Medical School Commencement Exercises, go to utsouthwestern.edu/commencement.

Commencement Continued from page 1

the Physician's Oath. The traditional Hooding Ceremony will not occur, instead replaced with comments from Hooding speaker Dr. Blake Barker, Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

With the virtual format, significant accomplishments of the graduating class will be honored in creative ways, including showing class photos and video clips. Graduates were invited to submit photos and videos. Diplomas and cords will be mailed to graduates following Commencement.

Once the decision was made for a virtual event, educational leadership and students brainstormed ways to make the event special, similar to the virtual Match Day celebration in March.

"We wanted to make sure that Commencement remained truly celebratory – honoring our graduates who put in four years of hard yet rewarding work to achieve this significant milestone in their educational journeys,"

said Dr. Angela Mihalic, Dean of Medical Students and Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

Graduates of the Medical School Class of 2020 include 36 students graduating with distinction, a firefighter/EMT, a competitive chess champion, a mom of a special needs child, a violist who has performed at Carnegie Hall, the holder of a third-degree black belt in taekwondo, and a competitive rock climber who also invented medical devices used to counter eye problems resulting from spaceflight.

Ceremonies for the 57 graduates of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences will be held in May 2021, combined with that year's graduating class. Initially, graduation had been set for May 21, 2020, in the Tom and Lula Gooch Auditorium on campus.

"We offered our graduates the option of a virtual ceremony, but they overwhelmingly preferred a commencement at a later date with

traditional regalia and hoodings by mentors," said Dr. Andrew Zinn, Dean of the Graduate School.

The 2020 Graduate School Class includes students who co-founded the Graduate Student/Postdoc Wellness Committee, co-founded the UTSW Science Policy, Education, and Communication group (SPEAC), co-founded the UTSW Chapter of The Association of African American Scientists (TAAAS), served as co-president of the UTSW Chapter of the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science, and co-developed a graduate student peer mentoring program for writing grants and fellowships.

Dr. Wilson

Dr. Wilson has served as President of Wayne State University since August 2013. Before that, he served as Deputy Director for Strategic Scientific Planning and Program Coordination at the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Earlier in his career, Dr. Wilson was

Dean of the School of Medicine and Vice President for Health Sciences at Creighton University, President of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Chancellor of the University of Colorado Denver/Anschutz Medical Campus, and Chair of the Board of Directors of University of Colorado Hospital.

Dr. Wilson's research has focused on glaucoma and blindness. He holds elected memberships in the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine), the Glaucoma Research Society, the American Ophthalmological Society, and the Society of Medical Administrators. For 2017-2018, he served as Chair of the Association of American Medical Colleges.

He has served on the Executive Committee of the NIH-funded Ocular Hypertension Treatment Study and Chaired the Data Monitoring and Oversight Committee of both the NIH-funded Los Angeles Latino Eye Study and the African-American Eye Disease Study. Dr. Wilson was a member of the advisory councils of

the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities and the former National Center for Research Resources. He currently serves on the Advisory Council of the NIH Director as well as the NIH Director's National Advisory Committee on Diversity in the Biomedical Research Workforce (co-Chair).

Dr. Wilson received his undergraduate degree from Allegheny College, an M.S. in epidemiology from the University of California, Los Angeles, and an M.D. from Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Lee holds the Atticus James Gill, M.D. Chair in Medical Science.

Dr. Podolsky holds the Philip O'Bryan Montgomery, Jr., M.D. Distinguished Presidential Chair in Academic Administration, and the Doris and Bryan Wildenthal Distinguished Chair in Medical Science.

Dr. Zinn holds the Rolf Haberecht and Ute Schwarz Haberecht Deanship of the UT Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

AOA Honor Medical Society welcomes 57 new members

Fifty-seven new members were inducted recently into the UT Southwestern Medical School chapter of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. Although COVID-19 prohibited the annual banquet, UT Southwestern celebrates all inductees and honors their accomplishments.

Members are selected based upon high academic standing, leadership among peers, professionalism, a firm sense of ethics, promise of future success in medicine, and a commitment to service in the school and community.



Alpha Omega Alpha Class of 2020 inductees are (asterisk denotes Junior AOA recognition):

Vijay Agusala	Tyler James Couch	Chengxi Li*	Wesley James Smith*
Oyindamola Nicole Akinseye	Analise Camille Doney	Ajay Mohan Narayanan	Alwin Somasundaram
Aya J. Alame	Whitney Tong Gao*	Paul Eugene Parisot III*	Ali Shah Tejani*
Caleb Quinn Ashbrook*	Priyanka Gaur*	Jamie Lynn Pfaff	Jacob Jay Welch
Gautam Babu	Alexander Bradley Guinn*	Alexandra Elizabeth Pottorff*	Hayley Elizabeth Williams
Daniel Nathan Beauchamp*	Muhammad Hassan Harirah	Edgar David Rodriguez*	Lawrence Wen Wu
Timothy Charles Benage	Chinonye Sharon Imo	Natalie Marie-Rose Schauwecker*	Danny Xu
Benjamin Aaron Saifer Bleiberg	Janice Ke Jiang*	Georgia Helena Abrantes Shelton	Helena Ningna You
Viet Quoc Chau*	Alysha Susan Joseph	Matthew Jiajing Siebert*	Samuel Adel Younan*
Jennifer Lynn Coias*	Rohan Bhalchandra Kanade*	Cory Sean Smith	Scott Zhou

Alpha Omega Alpha inducted nine faculty or alumni members in 2020:

Dr. David Albracht, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine
 Dr. Joseph Berger, Associate Professor of Internal Medicine
 Dr. Kavita Bhavan, Associate Vice Chair, Clinical Innovation and High Value Care, and Associate Professor of Internal Medicine
 Dr. Stephanie Brinker, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine
 Dr. Benjamin Levine, Professor of Internal Medicine
 Dr. Lauren Phillips, Assistant Professor of Neurology and Neurotherapeutics
 Dr. Padmaja Reddy, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine
 Dr. Melanie Sulistio, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Associate Professor of Internal Medicine
 Dr. Mark Watson, Professor of Surgery

Eight residents or fellows were inducted into AOA:

Dr. Bruno Concejo, Dr. Taylor Derosseau, Dr. Ashley Alane Hudson, Dr. Ryan Mals, Dr. Nicholas Norris, Dr. Vishnu Prathap, Dr. Ross C. Schumacher, and Dr. Priya Sharma.

Dr. Levine holds the Distinguished Professorship in Exercise Sciences.



Gold Humanism Honor Society inducts 41 new members

The Arnold P. Gold Foundation Gold Humanism Honor Society (GHHS) recently inducted 33 medical student members, four faculty members, and four residents into the ranks of its UT Southwestern Medical Center chapter. Unfortunately, the induction banquet had to be postponed due to COVID-19. UT Southwestern, nonetheless, celebrates each new member and the role model each provides in compassionate, patient-centered care.

MEDICAL SCHOOL CLASS OF 2021 INDUCTEES WERE:

(*indicates Class of 2021 co-Presidents)

Nikita Agarwal
 Jackson Ford Agraz
 Naveen Kishore Balakrishnan
 Darara Bediso Borodje
 Alvin Chung
 Petra Constable
 Anthony Quang Dao
 Christian Alexander Davidson
 Aseel Ali Dweik
 Micah Thomas Gamble
 Jaskeerat Gulati
 Natasha Nazerani Houshmand
 Kathryn Michelle Jan
 Taylore Anna King
 Emily Mae Magallanes
 Priya Mathew*
 Lakshmi Menon
 Logan Grant Mills
 Reshma Narain
 Hai-Uyen Nguyen
 Christine Jiyoon Park
 Syed Kazim Rizvi
 Lauren Rose Shaffer
 Katelynn Marie Smith
 Tiffany Son
 Jacob Stevens
 Priscilla Joanne Tanamal
 Zoe Tao
 Betty Tong
 Kevin Truong
 Adrienne Dramanique Walker
 Amy Xia*
 Lucio Zapata Jr.

GHHS FACULTY INDUCTEES WERE:

Dr. Monica Barbosa, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine
 Dr. Tamara McGregor, Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine, and Internal Medicine
 Dr. Shawna Nesbitt, Associate Dean, Student Diversity and Inclusion, and Professor of Internal Medicine
 Dr. Melanie Sulistio, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Associate Professor of Internal Medicine

RESIDENT INDUCTEES WERE:

Dr. Bayless Drum
 Dr. John D. Karalis
 Dr. Donald Richards Jr.
 Dr. Ali Rueschhoff

Dr. McGregor holds the Ozora F. Young, M.D. Professorship in Family Medicine.

UT SOUTHWESTERN GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Biological Chemistry

Curtis Wayne Bacon
 Nikhil Madhusudhan
 Tabitha Chung-Yan Ting

Biomedical Engineering

Busola Ruth Alabi
 Vamsi Krishna Daliparthi
 Xiaokun Huang

Cancer Biology

Wenting Du
 Chien-Hsiang Hsu
 Stacy Yuan Kasitinin
 Jin Suk Park
 Paul Matthew Yenerall II
 Jiawei Zhao

Cell and Molecular Biology

Miles Black
 Zachary Regino Gallegos

Clinical Psychology

Natalie Nicole Benedetto
 Jeanette Lee Chong
 Ana Fey El Behadli Gonzalez
 Cole David Hague
 Sarah Grace Pennant
 Hunter Boone Small
 Jessica Wiblin
 Lucas Zullo

Genetics, Development, and Disease

Sarah Elizabeth Addams
 Samadrita Bhattacharyya
 Edward Daniel
 Courtney DaVee Goldstein
 Stephen Li
 Victor Manuel Palacios
 Yu Zhang

Immunology

Yajing Gao
 Uma Maheswari Selvaraj

Integrative Molecular and Biomedical Sciences

Alexandra Lee Ghaben
 Haijing Guo
 Shidan Wang
 Fangzhou Zhao

Molecular Biophysics

Alexander Christian Partin
 Andrew Frank Schober Jr.
 Yusuf Talha Tamer

Molecular Microbiology

Angel Giovani Jimenez Lopez
 Breanna Lauren Pasko

Neuroscience

Ashley Grace Anderson
 Marissa Co
 Pei-Yi Lin
 Elizabeth Anne Scheuermann
 Alex Jay Sonneborn
 Xingjian Zhang
 Wenchan Zhao

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Biological Chemistry

James Henry McGinnis III

Biomedical Engineering

Busola Ruth Alabi

Molecular Biophysics

Jordan Finnell
 Michael Porter

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CLINICAL SCIENCE

Clinical Sciences

Rohan Khera
 Nirmish Singla, M.D.
 Ayesha Noor Zia

Ho Din Award Continued from page 1

heart tugged at her again.

She recalls helping deliver her first baby during her third year. The mother was an 18-year-old giving birth to her first child with her husband by her side. The baby was large and the labor long, but once the baby boy arrived, "I just remember the mom tearing up with happiness."

"Seeing the mom's face is the best feeling in the world," Dr. Gaur said. "They just have so much love in their eyes."

For Dr. Gaur, it was also love – and not just because of the chance to witness new life. "Obstetrics and gynecology allows the physician to follow women throughout their lifetime. You're able to counsel, educate, empower, and build continuity through both exceptional and routine moments," she said. "I don't think any other specialty allows you to partake in such a rich depth

of surgery and medicine and in all stages of a patient's life. With so much potential for human impact, that in itself is stimulating and exciting."

There was yet another attraction. Dr. Gaur combined a Master of Public Health with her medical degree, receiving an M.D./M.P.H., and plans to use that expertise to pursue public policy research. While in medical school, she founded a group called SPARC (Student Patient Advocates for the Rights of Our Communities) to get fellow students involved in political, economic, and social issues surrounding access to health care.

She was also active in FROGS (Future Residents of Obstetrics & Gynecology) and wants to study topics such as access to contraception and why the maternal mortality rate is so much higher for black mothers.

During her third year, Dr. Gaur did a study at Parkland Health & Hospital System that found the lack of child care was a major reason women miss medical appointments. Now Parkland is adding a hospital-based child care facility, expected to open this fall.

In addition to the Ho Din, Dr. Gaur received the 2020 Southwestern Gynecologic Assembly Award, given annually to an outstanding UT Southwestern graduate pursuing a career in obstetrics and gynecology.

"I want to be the fiercest advocate for women and the best clinician, and I think Ob/Gyn allows me to do all those things," Dr. Gaur said.

"Not only has Priyanka excelled academically and clinically, she has demonstrated a clear passion for patient and peer advocacy in many roles," said Dr. Angela Mihalic, Dean of Medical Students, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and a Distinguished Teaching Professor

in Pediatrics. "I have no doubt that she will be a force of nature advocating for her patients and that she will make an impact on a grand scale to improve the health of her community and society at large."

Kathleen M. Gibson, President and CEO of Southwestern Medical Foundation, said the Foundation is delighted to present the Ho Din Award and scholarship to a physician of the character and courage of Dr. Gaur. "Her wisdom and insights are inspiring as she commits to a career in public health to address significant unmet needs in women's health," she added.

Dr. Gaur will begin her Ob/Gyn residency at Johns Hopkins Hospital this July.

Before that adventure begins, however, she has another waiting. On May 30 – public health issues permitting – Dr. Gaur will marry Akash Agarwal, whom she met her freshman year at MIT and is now an engineer.

Postdoctoral biophysicist receives Brown-Goldstein Award

By Deborah Wormser

Biophysicist Dr. Lindsay Case remembers the moment in her research four years ago when she looked through a microscope and saw that the molecules she was studying formed dynamic liquid droplets that could trigger the formation of actin filaments, extending like a kaleidoscope of molecules. She was excited by the potential ramifications of this observation.

"Perhaps liquid phase-phase separation not only organizes these signaling molecules but also regulates their biochemical activity. There is growing evidence that phase separation is a major organizing principle in cells," she said. However, there are still a lot of questions about the functional consequences of clusters of macromolecules that hold together without the need of membranes, she added.

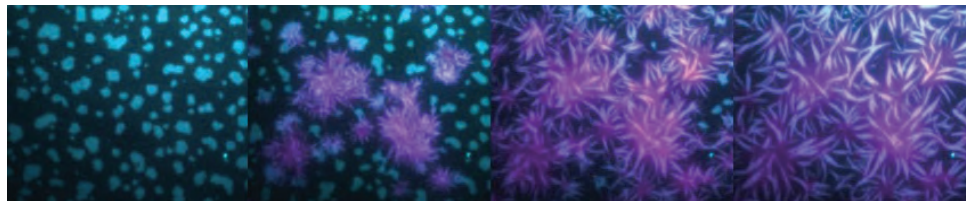
Dr. Case has devoted the past five years to studying the "why" behind the cellular phenomenon. In particular, she wanted to know how phase separation might regulate specific signaling pathways.

Her work uncovered a key mechanism of liquid-liquid phase separation that resulted in a study in *Science* and in her selection as the 2020 recipient of the Brown-Goldstein Award for Excellence in Postdoctoral Research.

The award given by the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences honors the contributions of Drs. Michael Brown and Joseph Goldstein to training future scientists. It represents the highest recognition the Graduate School bestows on postdoctoral trainees.

Dr. Case's mentor, Dr. Michael Rosen, was recently one of three scientists honored with the 2020 Wiley Prize in Biomedical Sciences for pioneering work revealing how liquid-filled cells can subcompartmentalize their insides without any membrane barriers.

Phase-separated biomolecular condensates are droplet like clusters of macromolecules that stay together like classic membrane-bound organelles but without the help of any physical barrier, akin to the separation of oil and water. The field has moved quickly in the last decade from the discovery of this phenomenon to understanding why the conden-



Dr. Lindsay Case (above) performs an experiment in the Rosen lab. In some of her work, she looked through a microscope (bottom, left to right) and saw that phase separation formed liquid droplets that could trigger the development of actin filaments, extending like a kaleidoscope of molecules.

sates occur.

Enter Dr. Case, who joined the Rosen lab to understand the formation of focal adhesions – the cell's attachment points to the external environment, which can go wrong in cancer, contributing to its spread.

First, she found that many of the molecules that make up focal adhesions undergo phase separation. Her work suggested that phase separation may be the mechanism by which focal adhesions form on the inner surface of the cell membrane. She has also found that phase separation can increase the biochemical activity of signaling molecules, which helps tune the cell's response to external stimuli.

"Lindsay brought the focal adhesion project to my lab and has revealed a key mechanistic principle that will frame all future work on these

important cellular structures," said Dr. Rosen, Chair of Biophysics and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator. "The Brown-Goldstein Award is a wonderful recognition of her commitment and success."

Dr. Case, also a 2020 recipient of the Damon Runyon-Dale F. Frey Award for Breakthrough Scientists, said Dr. Rosen greatly aided her success.

"Mike has been a supportive and encouraging mentor throughout my postdoc and has helped me to become a more critical and thoughtful scientist. I had very little experience with biochemistry prior to my postdoc, so I'm also indebted to my patient colleagues in the Rosen lab who helped teach me so many new skills and techniques," she said.

As a graduate student, Dr. Case met Dr. Rosen when he presented a lecture at the NIH. She earned

a Ph.D. in cell and developmental biology through a joint program at the NIH and the University of North Carolina.

"He presented his early work on phase separation. I was blown away by his talk," she recalled. "I realized that phase separation had the potential to conceptually shift our understanding of how cells are organized and could be a huge leap forward for cell biology. I got in touch with him about potentially doing my postdoc in his lab – and the rest is history."

As an undergraduate at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Dr. Case double majored in biology and French.

The Brown-Goldstein Award includes a monetary prize, as well as the opportunity to give a University Lecture. Dr. Case's seminar, "Protein Phase Separation Regulates Transmembrane Signaling," is scheduled this fall.

In addition, Brown-Goldstein Award finalists Alpaslan Tasdogan, Ph.D., Wenhan Zhu, Ph.D., and Zheng Kuang, Ph.D., postdoctoral scholars at the Children's Medical Center Research Institute at UT Southwestern, Department of Microbiology, and Department of Immunology, respectively, will receive Dean's Discretionary Awards for their outstanding research.

Dr. Brown, a Regental Professor, is Director of the Erik Jonsson Center for Research in Molecular Genetics and Human Disease, as well as a Professor of Molecular Genetics and Internal Medicine. He holds The W.A. (Monty) Moncrief Distinguished Chair in Cholesterol and Arteriosclerosis Research and the Paul J. Thomas Chair in Medicine.

Dr. Goldstein, a Regental Professor, is Chair of Molecular Genetics and a Professor of Molecular Genetics and Internal Medicine. He holds the Julie and Louis A. Beecher, Jr. Distinguished Chair in Biomedical Research and the Paul J. Thomas Chair in Medicine.

Dr. Rosen is also a Professor of Biophysics and in the Cecil H. and Ida Green Comprehensive Center for Molecular, Computational, and Systems Biology. He holds the Mar Nell and F. Andrew Bell Distinguished Chair in Biochemistry.

Haberecht Grant supports 'Wildhare-Idea' in obesity, diabetes research

By Rachel Stowe Master

Dr. Jan-Bernd Funcke, a postdoctoral fellow in the lab of Dr. Philipp Scherer, has been awarded the 2019-2020 Haberecht Wildhare-Idea Research Grant for his work establishing a new mouse model to assess the role that cell-cell interactions play in the development of obesity and Type 2 diabetes.

UT Southwestern's Haberecht Grant supports a speculative idea that, if correct, would constitute a breakthrough in biomedical research. Dr. Funcke's project was chosen for the one-year, \$25,000 award from among 31 proposals received from faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students.

"I feel honored winning this Haberecht Wildhare-Idea Research Grant. It gives me the unique opportunity to pursue a high risk-high reward idea for which it would be nearly impossible to obtain funding from traditional agencies," Dr. Funcke said.

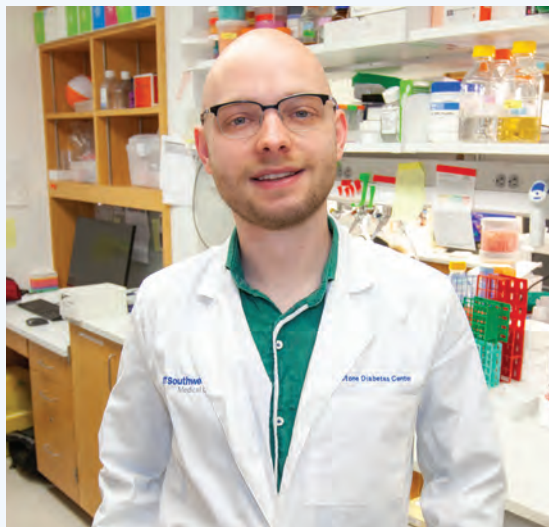
"Jan is unique in that he combines a profound knowledge of whole body physiology in the area of metabolism with a repertoire of outstanding molecular biology skills," said Dr. Scherer, Director of the Touchstone Center for Diabetes Research and Professor of Internal Medicine and Cell Biology. "This gives him the opportunity to generate highly sophisticated preclinical models that very few researchers would dare to design, with a high chance of gaining unique mechanistic insights."

Dr. Funcke's bold idea is to use technology from the field of synthetic biology to take control of the behavior of specific types of cells that are in direct contact with each other.

"Obesity is accompanied by chronic inflammation of fat tissue with a local accumulation of a certain type of immune cells, macrophages," he explained. "I intend to use the new model to turn fat cells into 'senders' and macrophages into 'receivers.' The model will then allow me to either mark or remove the 'receivers.' By this, I will be able to assess the role that macrophages in fat tissue play during the development of obesity and Type 2 diabetes."

If successful, the model would enable researchers for the first time to study macrophages in direct physical contact with fat cells, Dr. Scherer said.

"As such, this is a unique opportunity to gain a deeper understanding into the role of fat tissue/immune cell interactions," he explained. "No one else has managed to manipulate fat tissue immune cells selectively without



Dr. Jan-Bernd Funcke

altering these cells everywhere else in the organism."

The model would also allow researchers from diverse fields to explore how their favorite cell type interacts with other cell types, both in physiological and pathophysiological contexts, Dr. Funcke said.

"Insights gained using the proposed model may help to define what cell types and cell-cell interactions are most promising to target for disease therapies," he said.

Born and raised in Oberhausen in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany, Dr. Funcke earned his Ph.D. in molecular medicine from Ulm University, where he studied how mutations in the human *leptin* gene cause severe forms of childhood obesity. He was drawn to UTSW by Dr. Scherer's work.

"UT Southwestern offers a great environment for biomedical research," he said. "The Scherer lab works at the leading edge of metabolism research with a special interest in the biology of the adipocyte. For me, part of the attraction of becoming a member of the Scherer lab lay in Philipp's courage to push the boundaries of mouse transgenics to allow for increasingly refined studies using this model system."

Dr. Scherer holds the Gifford O. Touchstone, Jr. and Randolph G. Touchstone Distinguished Chair in Diabetes Research.

Network Continued from page 1

inclusion into NCCN will amplify our work with the nation's most advanced institutions."

Cancer centers at Harvard, Yale, Stanford, and the Mayo Clinic are among the members of NCCN, a Pennsylvania-based not-for-profit organization.

"We are very excited to incorporate the significant medical and scientific expertise from the Simmons Cancer Center into our network of top academic cancer centers," said Dr. Robert W. Carlson, Chief Executive Officer of NCCN. "The Simmons Cancer Center has a proven track record when it comes to improving outcomes and quality of life for people with cancer. Their facility includes top-notch programs throughout the spectrum of cancer management, including pediatric oncology, genetics, immunotherapy, telemedicine, and other increasingly important areas of interest for NCCN and the greater cancer care community."

Dr. John Sweetenham, the Simmons Cancer Center's Associate Director for Clinical Affairs, said the Center's inclusion in NCCN will allow it to be part of larger national discussions on the cost of care and further integrate best practices from peer institutions. It will also open new avenues of research funding for young investigators and clinical trials, and it will give the Simmons Cancer Center a more prominent role in establishing national and international guidelines for cancer care.

Entrance into NCCN is the latest in a series of milestones that the Simmons Cancer Center has achieved in the last year. In June, the Simmons Cancer Center broke ground on a nine-story tower that will add 300,000 square feet for outpatient care and clinical trials. Construction started on a second three-story radiation oncology building in September.

In February, the Simmons Cancer Center was awarded more than \$8.5 million in grants from the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT). In all, the Simmons Cancer Center has received more than \$500 million in CPRIT research funding since CPRIT was established in 2007.

Other Simmons Cancer Center research funding involves two Specialized Program of Research Excellence (SPORE) awards from the National Cancer Institute. One is in lung cancer – one of the largest thoracic oncology efforts in the U.S. – and the other is in kidney cancer, one of just two in the nation in that field. Total research funding for the Simmons Cancer Center for 2019 totaled more than \$90 million, up 40 percent from five years ago.

As one of 32 cancer centers named as a National Clinical Trials Network Lead Academic Participating Site, the Simmons Cancer Center offers patients greater access to new and investigational treatments. The Simmons Cancer Center oversees approximately 3 million outpatient cases a year and has nearly 200 faculty members. Simmons Cancer Center members have published in many prestigious medical journals including the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Nature*, *Science*, *JAMA*, *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, and *Cell*.

Dr. Arteaga is Associate Dean of Oncology Programs, Professor of Internal Medicine, and holder of The Lisa K. Simmons Distinguished Chair in Comprehensive Oncology.



Dr. Carlos L. Arteaga

Ambition propels Thelma Morgan to win Heart 2020 Step Challenge

By Courtney Borchert

Thelma Morgan was brought to tears when she looked down at the fitness tracker on her wrist and saw the number 85,637 glowing on the screen. That number marked the tens of thousands of steps she walked within a 24-hour period to honor her late father, and her first UT Southwestern Heart Month Step Challenge victory.

During the annual wellness initiative on Feb. 27, nearly 600 participants across campus walked a combined 7,005,690 steps, zooming past the institution's 5 million-step goal.

"For the fourth year of the challenge, I was determined to beat my last three scores," Ms. Morgan said. "I wanted to beat the 39K, the 46K, and the 44K, but I didn't think I was going to double it."

Ms. Morgan, a medical transcriptionist for Clinical Laboratory Services, has walked the halls of UT Southwestern for 35 years. She was set on bringing home the gold, along with the grand prize of breakfast tacos for her team delivered by Executive Vice President for Health System Affairs Dr. John Warner. Collectively, her Department contributed about 3 million steps in the challenge.

"As a cardiologist, I view Heart Month as a way to refocus on what I am going to do throughout the year to not only advance my own heart health, but of those around me – my family, my friends, my colleagues, and all of you," Dr. Warner told attendees at the celebratory breakfast held March 6. "Ms. Morgan is a great example of what we hope to do, which is to stimulate activity, get people



Thelma Morgan

thinking about ways to be more active at work, and encourage each other."

Ms. Morgan lost her father to a heart attack four years ago. She now walks more than 15,000 steps a day in his memory.

"My focus is walking and staying active because there are a lot of health issues in my family, but I'm

determined to beat all of that," she said. "I did the Step Challenge for my dad. He was my hero."

She woke up and started stepping at 12:01 a.m. on Feb. 27. The 64-year-old walked throughout the day's earliest hours, walked during her work breaks, and walked nonstop when she got home – all while remembering her purpose: "I'm doing it for Pops," she said.

Ms. Morgan recently received two intraocular lens implants after being diagnosed in 2006 with an eye condition that affected her vision. After pushing past those hurdles, she wanted this year to also highlight how far she has come after clearing so many challenging life events.

"I have a clear vision and a new focus," she said. "It's my 2020."

Ms. Morgan's resolve helped her walk more than 40 miles in a single day, and she wants others to recognize the strength and power of their own resiliency.

"My dad taught me to be an 'I can' person," she said. "Take on the challenge and see it as a mountain. Set your goals to reach the highest point, and do whatever it takes by any means necessary."

Ms. Morgan's incredible achievement in this year's challenge is evidence of her father's advice in action.

Dr. Warner holds the *Jim and Norma Smith Distinguished Chair for Interventional Cardiology and the Nancy and Jeremy Halbreich, Susan and Theodore Strauss Professorship in Cardiology.*

CLASS

NOTES

IN MEMORIAM

MEDICAL SCHOOL

Gilbert "Gil" S. Santoscoy, M.D. ('62)

Joe Lucien Sanders, M.D. ('64)

Phala A. Helm, M.D. ('66)

John Norville Chatfield, M.D. ('68)

For the latest updates on alumni events and news, visit engage.utsouthwestern.edu/alumni and follow @utswalumni on Facebook.

Please send your Class Notes contributions or address changes to the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, UT Southwestern Medical Center, 5323 Harry Hines Blvd., Dallas, TX 75390-9009, email alumni@utsouthwestern.edu, or call 214-648-4539.

Byron Davis takes charge of UTSW's information security

By Courtney Borchert

Byron Davis navigated through the chill aisles of server racks in the systems and data center, a critical facility known as the brain of UT Southwestern. More than 2,500 servers processed information in the background while the sound of whirring, cooling fans filled the space with white noise.

Mr. Davis, hired as Associate Vice President of Information Security and Chief Information Security Officer for UT Southwestern in December, paused a few feet away from a handful of security monitors to chat with employees. He has visited with many departments since his arrival to broaden his knowledge of the campus, the staff working behind the scenes, and how information security enables UT Southwestern's core missions.

He moved to Texas from Washington, D.C., in 2015 with his wife and two children after serving in the U.S. intelligence and national security communities for about 17 years. Mr. Davis worked as an Operations Officer in the CIA and was Global Head of Intelligence Collection at the U.S. Department of Energy, where he

managed the intelligence and counterintelligence collection program, including oversight of 15 U.S. National Laboratories' intelligence activities.

"At the same time, I was working with various Fortune 500 companies while at the Central Intelligence Agency – their CEOs, their executives – around these public-private partnerships to reduce risks to their companies and intellectual property," he said. "I saw a lot of opportunity to jump into the private sector and really make a difference."

In Texas, he joined State Farm to help run security operations, and then Farmer Brothers, a publicly traded manufacturing and distribution company, where he served as CISO and Senior Director for IT Infrastructure.

With more than two decades of experience in private and government sectors, Mr. Davis is ready to take on the unique challenges that come with a complex institution like UTSW in an ever-changing cybersecurity landscape. The Medical Center integrates health care, education, and research under one roof, and its systems are under constant threat of attack or misuse of data from inside and outside



Byron Davis in UT Southwestern's data center

the organization.

"UT Southwestern is really at the cutting edge of three major growth industries – that's one of the things that excites me most about the institution. But it's also the thing that keeps me up at night," Mr. Davis said. "From a cybersecurity perspective, the systems that are largely decentralized and unmanaged by Information Resources introduce additional risks to all of UT Southwestern."

Cybercriminals are becoming more sophisticated, always evolving and adaptive. Mr. Davis said cybersecurity breaches and unauthorized data access are a growing concern among research organizations, higher education institutions, and in the health care industry because those organizations are heavily targeted by attackers.

He said diligence and teamwork are vital to staying ahead of cybercriminals.

"Information security encompasses a variety of different aspects, which involve securing data and computer systems to protect our customers' information, our patients' information, our employees, and our systems at large, which enable the organization to do its business," Mr. Davis said. "One of my initiatives in this coming year is to be able to work closely with the various departments around campus to help reduce risk across decentralized IT systems."

Mr. Davis' analytical nature was fostered through his studies in college. He received an undergraduate degree in materials science and engineering from North Carolina State University, a master's degree in forensic sciences from George Washington University, and completed postgraduate work in international affairs at American University. This educational background enhanced his critical thinking skills.

"There's no one day in the life of a chief information security officer that is the same," Mr. Davis said. "Agility is pretty key to me. I'm able to pivot between different roles, different organizations, and among different types of cultures."

GIFTS FOR UT SOUTHWESTERN

Hoglund support UTSW orthopedic, geriatric programs

Inspired by the outstanding medical care they received at UT Southwestern, Sally and Forrest Hoglund and their family have made a generous \$300,000 gift to support the work of geriatrician Dr. Craig Rubin and orthopedic surgeon Dr. Joel Wells.

"We understand that, as people age, geriatric medical professionals guide families and make a difference in their quality of life on a daily basis. As the general population ages, there will be an increasing need for specialized geriatric physicians. It seemed a natural fit for us," said Kelly H. Compton, the Hoglunds' daughter.

The Hoglund family's gift will provide UTSW with the leverage and flexibility to recruit talented clinician educators in geriatric medicine to both care for our patients and help train medical students, residents, and other health care providers in the care of older adults.

Because of weakening bones and the onset of other medical issues, seniors are especially susceptible to breaking a hip. The family's gift will enable Dr. Wells, Assistant Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, to build a first-of-its-kind, comprehensive database that



Dr. Rubin



Dr. Wells

will be an important research tool to properly treat patients and teach providers the optimal treatment for complex hip pathologies.

Dr. Rubin, Professor of Internal Medicine, holds *The Margaret and Trammell Crow Distinguished Chair in Alzheimer's and Geriatric Research, the Seymour Eisenberg Distinguished Professorship in Geriatric Medicine, the Sinor/Pritchard (Katy Sinor and Kay Pritchard) Professorship in Medical Education Honoring Donald W. Seldin, M.D., and the Walsdorf Professorship in Geriatrics Research.*

1 Million 4 Anna supports Ewing sarcoma research

At age 16, doctors diagnosed Anna Basso with Ewing sarcoma, an extremely rare, aggressive type of cancer that forms in bone or soft tissue. Knowing the enormous battle she faced, her family and friends sent out a call for prayers.

"We reached a million prayers one week before Anna passed away," said her mother, Carol Basso. "She saw that people were praying for her from all over the world. That touched her."

In 2012, Mrs. Basso, her husband, David, and Anna's older sister, Patrice, fulfilled Anna's wish to start a foundation to help advocate for all Ewing sarcoma patients and defeat the disease.

The Foundation's latest gift of \$100,000, which brings its total giving to UT Southwestern to more than \$600,000, will be used to study targeted therapy and immunotherapy for Ewing sarcoma.

Turners establish fund for student scholarships

Dr. William W. Turner Jr. and his wife, Rosemary (Toni), recently joined The Heritage Society and announced a bequest to establish the William and Rosemary Turner Endowed Fund at Southwestern Medical Foundation. This fund will support scholarships at UT Southwestern Medical School, where Dr. Turner completed his general surgery residency in 1977.

Dr. Turner, a Professor of Surgery in the Division of General and Acute Care Surgery, has been a member of the UT Southwestern faculty for more than 37 years. Dr. Turner is also the Master of Sprague College. He and his wife believe deeply in supporting future generations of students pursuing the best medical education.

"To us, it's important that those who work hard have every opportunity possible to join UT Southwestern Medical School. We want the best and the brightest, no matter their circumstances," Dr. Turner said.

Dr. Turner holds the *Alvin Baldwin, Jr. Chair in Surgery, and the Carla and Paul Bass Professorship in Medical Education Honoring Charles C. Sprague, M.D.*



Dr. William W. Turner Jr. and his wife, Rosemary (Toni)

Southern named Professor Emeritus of Pathology after four decades at UTSW

By Carol Marie Cropper

Dr. Paul Southern's career took him around the world as he studied and educated others about infectious diseases. He went to Belize to investigate a parasitic infection, and to Kuwait and Japan to lecture medical students and others in the field.

Now, after 47 years of treating patients and running a research lab at UT Southwestern, Dr. Southern has been appointed Professor Emeritus of Pathology.

"There have been few faculty who embody the ideals of service, collegiality, professionalism, mentoring, and dedication to patients, colleagues, and trainees that Dr. Paul Southern displayed through his career at UTSW," said Dr. James Malter, Professor and Chair of Pathology. "He trained dozens of internists and pathologists who became leading figures in the field of microbiology and he published extensively. His fund of knowledge was legendary, especially of the unique and odd diseases that often presented at Parkland Memorial Hospital."

Dr. Southern actually spent most of the last 65 years at UT Southwestern, arriving in 1955 for his first year of medical school. The Fort Worth



Dr. Paul Southern

native also completed his residency and a fellowship in infectious diseases and clinical microbiology here.

After brief stints in private practice and as an Assistant Professor elsewhere, he returned to

UT Southwestern in 1974 as an Associate Professor and became Director of the Infectious Diseases Fellowship Program. In 1992, he attended the prestigious London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and earned a diploma in tropical medicine and hygiene.

In his office in the Charles Cameron Sprague Clinical Science Building on South Campus, a photo of himself with family members at Peru's famed Machu Picchu sits atop one bookcase, while a mock-up of London's Notting Hill Gate Tube station sign is perched on another.

"It's been interesting intellectually. It's been fun," Dr. Southern, 87, said of his decades at UT Southwestern. "I've had a lot of good colleagues that I count as friends. I've had supportive department chairs."

Just as Dr. Southern was stepping back from active medical practice and research, a new infectious disease—COVID-19—was spreading around the world. A former UT Southwestern infectious disease fellow, Dr. Francis Riedo, was in the news as he treated COVID-19 patients in Washington state.

Dr. Southern said he exchanged emails with Dr. Riedo, but did not miss being caught up in the whirlwind. He had been involved with

epidemics before.

He recalled treating patients for the Hong Kong flu in the late 1960s. Then there was SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) in 2002. In 2009, H1N1 influenza, also known as the swine flu, hit Dallas. "There were big pandemics of the flu every few years."

Then, in 2012, the mosquito-borne West Nile virus spiked in Dallas. "We had a lot of patients at Parkland," he said.

As a young physician, it did not take long for Dr. Southern to notice that Parkland, Dallas County's publicly supported hospital, treated a lot of patients suffering from tropical diseases due to Texas' proximity to Mexico. Chagas, spread by bloodsucking bugs called triatomines, in particular caught his attention. The infection can lead to inflammation of the heart or brain and remain in the body for decades.

Over the past 15 years, Dr. Southern focused on Chagas' disease, spending time in Belize and Guatemala to study the disease and finding it more widespread than originally thought.

Dr. Malter holds *The Senator Betty and Dr. Andy Andujar Distinguished Chairmanship of Pathology*.



UT Southwestern has received numerous donations supporting its efforts against COVID-19, including these bottles of hand sanitizer from Mary Kay Inc.

COVID-19 Continued from page 1

COVID-19 infection rate curve was flattening, although Dr. Podolsky cautioned that it was too early to draw conclusions.

Meanwhile, almost half of UT Southwestern's COVID-19 patients were signing up to participate in clinical trials, he said. The institution is participating in trials to test promising but unproven therapies involving antiviral drugs as well as agents to tamp down a patient's inflammatory response. Doctors were also exploring the emergency compassionate use of convalescent plasma from recovered patients in hopes that their antibodies could help others fight the virus.

To aid in the ongoing research, UT Southwestern established a biorepository for specimens from patients infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19, as well as a registry of patients known to have had the infection.

As local officials extended social distancing restrictions to the end of April, UT Southwestern adjusted operations. About 8,000 employees were instructed to work from home, all research labs except those investigating COVID-19 were closed, and students shifted to online learning.

The University also made the difficult decision to cancel its traditional Medical School graduation ceremony. The school's 77th Commencement will instead be an online video event, with comments from Dr. Podolsky and others in education leadership, along with a reading of each graduate's name. It was set to go online at 2 p.m. on May 2.

"UT Southwestern is prepared in a way that might have been unimaginable, frankly, a couple of months ago but will clearly be needed in the weeks ahead, and we are ready," Dr. Podolsky told members of the campus community in a recorded message on April 1, the first in a series of weekly briefings planned during the

COVID-19 crisis.

COVID-19, which can cause severe flu-like symptoms and for which there is no vaccine, surfaced in the U.S. in January after originating late last year in China. The disease caused by a novel coronavirus made its way to North Texas by early March, with Dallas County reporting its first presumptive case on March 10 and its first death on March 19.

UT Southwestern was in a better position to handle a feared surge of patients than many other hospitals because of design innovations built into Clements University Hospital, which opened in 2014, Dr. Podolsky said. Thanks to this "forward thinking," he said, a large part of the hospital can be transformed for respiratory isolation.

Still, there were challenges. Several actions had to be taken to preserve an adequate supply of critical personal protective equipment (PPE), such as masks and gloves, for health care workers.

UT Southwestern also received many generous donations from the community, including thousands of masks and other types of protective equipment. Gifts also included free meals for weary medical workers and \$500,000 from Mark Cuban and the Dallas Mavericks Foundation to help reimburse health care workers from UT Southwestern and Parkland Memorial Hospital for child care expenses.

As a new benefit to UT Southwestern employees, a COVID-19 Virtual Care Clinic opened April 8 for all employees, faculty, and their family members, as well as patients of UTSW specialists. The clinic offers quick access to COVID-19 screening for family members age 12 and older through a virtual visit, with follow-up care if needed. The service was made available regardless of whether the employee or family member was a current UT South-

western patient, with their insurance to be billed for the visit.

Employees feeling stressed can also access the free mental health hotline (214-645-5686) operated by the Psychiatry Department.

A major issue nationwide has been limited testing capability for the virus. To help patients in North Texas, UT Southwestern added a "high throughput" platform to allow rapid screening of test results and made it available to other health care networks, including Texas Health Resources and Methodist Health System, Dr. Podolsky said. The institution has also committed to expand testing in South Dallas and to work with the National Guard to run tests, he said.

During the crisis, UT Southwestern rescheduled all elective surgeries until after May 8 and nonurgent office visits until after June 1, and expanded telehealth services by training hundreds of providers. By late April, Dr. Podolsky noted, the institution was delivering more than 6,000 telehealth visits in a single week using video conferencing or the phone.

"I am enormously impressed by the dedication, resilience, and commitment that I have seen in UT Southwestern faculty, staff, and students," Dr. Podolsky said on April 1.

Addressing the financial impact on the institution, Dr. Podolsky stressed that UT Southwestern came into this crisis in an extraordinarily strong position. While delaying elective procedures has reduced revenue and the state may face economic hardship, the institution received nearly \$26 million in federal money from the \$2 trillion CARES Act passed by Congress and had no plans to trim staff, he said.

While he told the campus on April 22 that UT Southwestern will need to look for areas to save, "They do not include reductions in force and they do not include furloughs."

Earlier in the month, Dr. Podolsky stressed that the goal would be to preserve the jobs of UT Southwestern employees so the institution can continue on its mission into the future.

"Clements University Hospital does not take care of anybody; it's the people in Clements University Hospital who take care of patients. The laboratories are not responsible for the groundbreaking discoveries that get made at UT Southwestern; it's the people in the buildings who are making those discoveries," he continued.

"We will go through this challenge together, deliver on our mission to help those who need our care and to advance medical science and to teach and train the next generation, and emerge on the other side as still a vibrant academic medical center."

Dr. Podolsky holds the *Philip O'Bryan Montgomery, Jr., M.D. Distinguished Presidential Chair in Academic Administration*, and the *Doris and Bryan Wildenthal Distinguished Chair in Medical Science*.



Dr. Timothy Schacherer

Schacherer named first Bucholz Professor in Orthopaedic Surgery

By Rachel Stowe Master

An unwavering dedication to exceptional care has enabled Dr. Timothy Schacherer to build strong trust and loyalty among his patients, many of whom have been with him for decades.

"Some of these people that I've taken care of were with me when I showed up here in 1994 and have been my patients for over 20 years now," said Dr. Schacherer, Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and Plastic Surgery. "They followed me into private practice and then followed me back to the University. They're truly my patients. It's like a private practice within the University."

Dr. Schacherer first joined UTSW in 1994 after retiring from the Navy. He left for private practice in 1998 and then was recruited back to UTSW in 2013 to help run the hand and upper extremity services. Recently he was appointed the inaugural holder of the Robert W. Bucholz, M.D. Professorship in Orthopaedic Surgery.

An accomplished surgeon and tireless educator, the late Dr. Bucholz served as UTSW's first Chair of Orthopaedic Surgery from 1989 to 2006.

"It's quite an honor since I worked with Dr. Bucholz back in the '90s when I retired from the Navy," he said. "He was a well-respected orthopedist and he taught people here for more than 20 years."

Dr. Dane K. Wukich, Professor and Chair of Orthopaedic Surgery, called the Bucholz honor befitting.

"As a retired U.S. Navy Captain who graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy, Dr. Schacherer exemplifies the pillars of leadership—integrity, responsibility, and accountability," Dr. Wukich said. "In addition to being a highly skilled surgeon, Dr. Schacherer's patients reward him with exceptional patient satisfaction scores. He is a role model for all members of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery."

After earning his medical degree from the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, Dr. Schacherer served both an internship in general surgery and his residency in orthopedic surgery at the Naval Medical Center. He then completed a fellowship in hand surgery at Thomas Jefferson University.

"This endowment will allow us to involve the residents in some additional research that's funded. We try to have the residents on the shoulder and elbow service produce a paper for publication each rotation, so this will help," Dr. Schacherer said.

Dr. Wukich holds the *Dr. Charles F. Gregory Distinguished Chair in Orthopaedic Surgery*.