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Institute of Medicine honors UT Southwestern OB/GYN

DALLAS – July 2, 2009 – The American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology has endowed a fellowship to the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine in honor of Dr. Norman Gant, professor of obstetrics and gynecology at UT Southwestern Medical Center.

The Norman F. Gant/American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology/Anniversary Fellowship is the first named fellowship established at the institute. Two previous Institute of Medicine fellowships were established in 2006 to mark the institute's 35th anniversary.

"These are very rare birds," said Dr. Marie Michnich, director of health policy education programs and fellowships at the institute. "It's a great honor."

The two-year fellowship includes a research grant, plus travel and stipend money to support the fellow as he or she participates in Institute of Medicine boards and committees in Washington, D.C. The grant is meant to introduce early-career faculty members to health policy from the perspectives of legislators, patient interest groups and industry representatives.

Dr. Gant, who was elected to the Institute of Medicine in 2001, said he was pleased that the grant will allow young physicians to bring women's health issues to the forefront.

"Early on in their careers, obstetricians and gynecologists will be put in front of influential people who can learn about the needs of women," he said. "I think our country is one of the only industrialized nations that does not prioritize the needs of women and children. We have a high perinatal mortality rate."

Dr. Steven Bloom, chairman of obstetrics and gynecology at UT Southwestern, called Dr. Gant "a tireless supporter for the establishment of research funding for young obstetricians and gynecologists in training."

Dr. Gant has served as executive director of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology since 1993. The nonprofit group certifies obstetricians and gynecologists and approves U.S. graduate medical education programs in the specialties.

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A native of Wichita Falls, Dr. Gant received his medical degree in 1964 from UT Southwestern, where he also completed his residency and fellowships. He joined the faculty in 1968 and served as chairman of obstetrics and gynecology from 1977 to 1983.

His awards include the Baden-Gibbs Award from the Texas Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Career Achievement Award from the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine.

The first holder of the Gant Fellowship will be announced Aug. 1. For information on the nomination process, visit www.iom.edu/CMS/3800/63191.aspx.

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