

# SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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## UT SOUTHWESTERN TO TRAIN GENOMICS RESEARCHERS

DALLAS — October 11, 1995 — UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas has received a five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health National Center for Human Genome Research to train physicists, chemists, computer scientists and engineers to map the human genome.

The \$810,726 training grant is the first of its kind in the nation. It will enable the faculty of UT Southwestern's Eugene McDermott Center for Human Growth and Development to teach both the fundamentals of molecular biology and genetics and the technical skills needed to do genome research to people with undergraduate or graduate degrees in physics, chemistry, computer science or engineering.

The Human Genome Project is a unique research initiative that crosses traditional lines between scientific disciplines. Based in biology, it is an effort to locate, characterize and learn the function of every gene that makes up a human being. That requires special expertise in physics, chemistry, computer science and engineering, in addition to biology and genetics.

"We need to train the scientists of the future to do this multidisciplinary work," said Dr. Glen Evans, McDermott Center director. Evans holds the Eugene McDermott Distinguished Chair for the Study of Human Growth and Development.

The grant will support training of four graduate students, two postdoctoral fellows and two summer interns at the undergraduate or graduate level, Evans said.

"People who are cross-trained basically don't exist," explained Dr. Harold "Skip" Garner, Jr., professor of biochemistry and holder of the Philip O'Bryan Montgomery Jr., M.D., Distinguished Chair in Developmental Biology. "We are going to create them."

(MORE)

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Garner himself is a physicist who has learned his molecular biology on the job since he teamed up with Evans to do genome research.

The trainees will work with McDermott Center faculty. The McDermott Center is a multidisciplinary research center involving faculty from many departments, including internal medicine, pediatrics, biochemistry, molecular genetics, bioengineering and pathology. They share core lab facilities and common space in the Simmons Biomedical Research Building on the North Campus and collaborate on common research interests.

The executive committee for the cross-disciplinary training project includes Evans, Garner, and Dr. Roger Schultz, assistant professor in the genetics and development program of Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

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