

# SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

Media contact: Rachel Donihoo  
(214) 648-3404  
rachel.donihoo@email.swmed.edu

## **\$2 MILLION GIFT TO UT SOUTHWESTERN ACCELERATES BREAST-CANCER, MACULAR-DEGENERATION RESEARCH**

DALLAS – October 14, 1999 – Anne Marie and Thomas B. Walker Jr. have donated \$2 million to advance research at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas into two devastating diseases that have hit close to home. Their gift, made to Southwestern Medical Foundation, will support the search for a cure for breast cancer and for age-related macular degeneration.

Half of the gift will establish the Anne Marie and Thomas B. Walker Jr. Fund for Clinical Research for New Treatments in Breast Cancer, a disease that Mrs. Walker successfully battled a decade ago. The goal of the fund, which will be directed by Dr. George Peters, executive director of the Southwestern Center for Breast Care, will be to unite radiologists and oncologists in an effort to uncover better ways to treat breast cancer.

"The Walkers have not only been generous supporters of our breast center, they also have been true friends," said Peters, who treated Mrs. Walker during her battle with cancer. "Their overwhelming contribution will allow us to investigate new treatments for breast cancer and formulate innovative programs that will enhance the quality of life of our patients. I am humbled and appreciative of their faith in helping us develop our premier center." Peters holds the Marilyn R. Corrigan Distinguished Chair in Breast Cancer Surgery.

The other half of the gift will establish the Anne Marie and Thomas B. Walker Jr. Fund for Research on Age-Related Macular Degeneration of the Retina. The fund should help UT Southwestern scientists, led by Dr. Albert Edwards, assistant professor of ophthalmology, uncover genetic clues behind age-related macular degeneration (AMD), one of the leading causes of blindness in the United States. The Walkers both suffer from the disease.

"The Walkers have been a pleasure to work with, and I'm extremely grateful that they have endowed AMD research with such essential and generous support," said Edwards, who has treated them both. "This valuable gift will provide us with the infrastructure for successfully conducting genetic studies, which require a great deal of time and tremendous resources. This

(MORE)

## WALKER GIFT - 2

gift lays a wonderful foundation for uncovering innovative ways to prevent and treat AMD."

Thomas Walker said, "My wife and I had always wanted to do something to help foster breast-cancer research and honor Dr. Peters. And when we were both diagnosed with macular degeneration, we knew the time was right to get the ball rolling. We recognized an immediate need for both funds and wanted to do what we could to help."

A banking and securities pioneer, Walker helped lead Goldman Sachs and Co. to international success, opening the first Texas office and helping to establish other offices worldwide. He retired from his position as general partner of the company in 1984 but has remained active, both personally and professionally.

Thomas Walker, a *magna cum laude* graduate of Vanderbilt University and Navy veteran, and his wife of 49 years have donated considerable time, money and energy to a variety of educational, professional and civic organizations nationally and locally.

"The Walkers' reputation for generosity is matched only by their reputation for community involvement," said Dr. Kern Wildenthal, UT Southwestern president. "We're thrilled that they have created this far-reaching endowment and are especially pleased that they have made the contribution to aid two areas of such tremendous importance."

W. Plack Carr Jr., Southwestern Medical Foundation president, agreed. "The Walkers' gift will have an enormous impact on the future of breast cancer and macular-degeneration research, not only at UT Southwestern, but throughout the country," he said. "A gift of this magnitude sets the stage for true breakthroughs in science and patient care."

###