

# SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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## **Distinguished Chair honors Texas Speaker of the House and wife**

DALLAS – Oct. 8, 2004 – Dallas friends of Texas Speaker of the House Tom Craddick and his wife, Nadine, are honoring the couple by endowing a Distinguished Chair in Medical Science at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

Nobel laureate Dr. Alfred Gilman, interim dean of the medical school and chairman of pharmacology at UT Southwestern, will be the first holder of the \$1 million chair. Dr. Gilman won the 1994 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for his work on “G proteins,” which serve as a crucial part of cell communication networks.

Louis Beecherl, former chairman of the UT System Board of Regents, and his wife, Julie, said that with the support of others who appreciate the Craddicks’ leadership, they wanted to commemorate the couple’s tireless efforts on behalf of their home state. “We believed that the most appropriate means of memorializing their great contributions to medical research and higher education was to support advances in these areas in their name. There was no more appropriate place to do that than at UT Southwestern.”

“Louis and Julie have been extraordinary friends over the years and we are humbled that they and those who encouraged them have chosen to honor Nadine and me by endowing this distinguished chair,” said Speaker Craddick.

“We have been aware for many years that UT Southwestern is one of Texas’ greatest treasures,” added Mrs. Craddick. “It will be a great pleasure and privilege for our family to have our names linked to such a fine institution in perpetuity.”

“We are enormously gratified that the Beecherls chose to express their admiration of Speaker and Mrs. Craddick’s dedication to higher education and research by creating an endowment in their honor at UT Southwestern,” said Dr. Kern Wildenthal, president of the medical center. “Nadine and Tom Craddick are both committed to making Texas a national leader in medical science and their support of UT Southwestern has been of tremendous importance for our progress.”

Dr. Wildenthal noted that when a budget deficit required cuts in state spending in the 2003 legislative session, Speaker Craddick and other leaders recognized that the state’s medical schools, with their small enrollments, would be unable to compensate for smaller appropriations by raising tuition.

(MORE)

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## **Craddick Distinguished Chair – 2**

“He and other far-sighted state leaders did not want to see Texas left behind in the increasingly competitive field of medical science, and they took important steps to ensure that research excellence and expansion were protected.”

At UT Southwestern, a special item appropriation of \$7 million per year was approved for a unique research institute to advance the work of the institution’s four Nobel Prize winners and 15 National Academy of Sciences members and the junior faculty they recruit and mentor. In addition, \$56 million in bonding authority was authorized for a new biomedical research facility, to help accommodate the massive increase in federally funded research projects that has been achieved in recent years by UT Southwestern. That building is currently under construction and will open in 2006.

Mr. Craddick was elected Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives in January 2003. He was instrumental in creating the Texas Enterprise Fund, a \$295 million initiative that makes economic development grants to businesses and institutions that create jobs in the state. He also was involved in securing funding for a number of health and medical research programs across the state.

A member of the Texas House from Midland since 1969, he previously served as chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, the House Public Health Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee.

Mrs. Craddick said she has had a “passion” for children’s health issues since her college years at Texas Tech University, where she and her husband met. A Sweetwater native, she has served on the board of directors of Midland Memorial Hospital and is presently on the hospital’s Board of Governors.

Mr. and Mrs. Beecherl are well-known in Dallas and across the state for their philanthropy and their unflagging support of numerous civic causes. Their previous gifts for UT Southwestern programs include \$1 million toward construction of Zale Lipshy University Hospital, \$1 million for a Center for Basic Research in Molecular Immunology and \$1 million to endow the Julie and Louis A. Beecherl Jr. Distinguished Chair in Biomedical Science which is held by UT Southwestern Nobel Laureate Dr. Joseph L. Goldstein, chairman of molecular genetics.

“Over the years, the support of Mr. and Mrs. Beecherl has been crucial for the success of many initiatives at UT Southwestern,” said Dr. Gilman. “We are honored that they have again placed their faith in our institution by recognizing the immeasurable contributions of Speaker and Mrs. Craddick to medicine and science in this way.”

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