

Media Contact: Rachel Skei Donihoo
214-648-3404
rachel.donihoo@utsouthwestern.edu

UT Southwestern President's Research Council endowment establishes medical science professorship in honor of Wildenthals

DALLAS – July 9, 2008 – The President's Research Council of UT Southwestern Medical Center has raised more than \$100,000 to establish a professorship in honor of Dr. Kern and Marnie Wildenthal. The gift recognizes their superior leadership and decades of service to the medical center.

The endowment – which was a surprise to the Wildenthals – was announced at the organization's annual dinner in May. It will create the Marnie and Kern Wildenthal President's Research Council Professorship in Medical Science.

Dr. Wildenthal will retire in September as president of UT Southwestern, a position he has held since 1986. Mrs. Wildenthal, a middle-school teacher at the Episcopal School of Dallas for more than 30 years, has combined her duties representing UT Southwestern alongside her husband with an active volunteer role in the community.

"Kern and Marnie have a great heart for the young, talented researchers who come to UT Southwestern to study and work," said Jody Hawn, who co-chairs the PRC with his wife, Sarah. "The President's Research Council is a group of donors who support the Wildenthals' vision and are setting up an endowment for that purpose to honor them. We think history will show that no one has done more for Dallas and its citizens than they have."

The PRC, which annually presents the Distinguished Young Researcher Awards to faculty members early in their research careers when federal grants can be difficult to obtain, is made up of community leaders interested in learning about and advancing medical research at UT Southwestern. Its membership fees support research by new faculty investigators. Each year PRC members are invited to attend four lectures by leading medical center researchers as well as the annual banquet honoring awardees. The organization was established in 1985 by Dallas philanthropists Cece Smith and Ford Lacy.

"PRC members simply wanted to honor Kern upon his retirement from UT Southwestern and express our gratitude for his service to the medical center, the PRC and to Dallas. Marnie has been

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such an integral part of the medical center during his tenure, and we felt it was crucial that she be honored as well,” said Ms. Smith.

Mr. Lacy added: “In addition, we wanted to create a professorship that would expand the role of the President’s Research Council at UT Southwestern and encourage winners of the PRC’s Young Researcher Award to remain at the medical center and continue their research efforts here.”

The Marnie and Kern Wildenthal President’s Research Council Professorship in Medical Science will always be held by one of the former winners of the Distinguished Young Researcher Award. An investigator will hold the position for five years, after which it will be passed on to another former winner.

“This really is overwhelming to have something this lovely done in one’s honor to benefit the medical school,” said Mrs. Wildenthal. “When the President’s Research Council was conceived, it was intended to be an opportunity to introduce the medical school to the broader community. Ford and Cece saw this as an opportunity for people in the community to become acquainted with UT Southwestern and to advocate for medical research. Now, more than 20 years later, it has become something even greater than what it was intended to be. We sincerely thank you for your support, your friendship and for this wonderful gift in our name, which we could not have imagined.”

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