

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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SCIENTIST RECEIVES RESEARCH TO PREVENT BLINDNESS AWARD

DALLAS – Oct. 23, 1996 – Dr. W. Matthew Petroll of UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas has received a 1996 Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) Manpower Award.

The unrestricted award for \$20,000 to further Petroll's work brings the total of Research to Prevent Blindness grants to UT Southwestern's eye-research programs to more than \$1.2 million.

Petroll is an assistant professor in the Department of Ophthalmology, one of the largest academic, clinical and research units in the country devoted to discovery of the causes of blindness and treatment and prevention of blinding diseases.

Petroll is studying corneal wound healing and is looking specifically at the repair mechanisms of the corneal endothelium, a single-cell layer on the back of the cornea. Its healing is critical because the cornea can become cloudy if its endothelium does not heal, creating the need for a corneal transplant.

"RPB has been quite generous to ophthalmology departments throughout the country, and its support is particularly valuable in today's funding environment," said Petroll, who also recently received a three-year, \$390,000 federal grant from the National Eye Institute, an arm of the National Institutes of Health.

RPB is the world's leading volunteer organization providing support for eye research. Since it was founded in 1960, RPB has channeled more than \$136 million to medical institutions throughout the United States for research into all blinding eye diseases.

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