

# SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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## **INTERNIST RECEIVES PRESIDENT'S RESEARCH COUNCIL AWARD**

DALLAS -- June 22, 1994 -- Dr. Mark William Walberg is the recipient of the 1994 Distinguished Young Researcher Award presented by the President's Research Council (PRC) of The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Walberg is an assistant professor of internal medicine in hematology/oncology and a researcher in the Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center.

The award is supported by PRC members and is presented annually by the council, which is made up of community leaders who are interested in the advancement of science and medicine through research. The award was presented to Walberg at a June 7 dinner in his honor.

"My work is directed at finding how cancer-causing oncogenes affect cell division," Walberg said. In cancers, cells continue to multiply past the time they normally would stop. This abnormal division is due, partly, to oncogenes. Oncogenes were first identified by their ability to override the mechanism cells use to stop dividing. "We're working to understand how these oncogenes disrupt the normal control of cell division. The goal of my research is to find proteins that mediate the effects of oncogenes."

Understanding oncogene functions will allow the development of new anticancer drugs directly targeted at abnormal oncogene function. By targeting the drugs to a specific cell division function, the drugs should be more effective and produce fewer side effects in patients, Walberg said.

"Dr. Walberg's research is important and exciting," said Dr. Kern

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Wildenthal, president of UT Southwestern. "Thanks to the support of the council, researchers will be able to develop better diagnostic tests for cancer and may produce new and more effective cancer treatments that are targeted directly at the abnormalities that cause cells to become cancers," Wildenthal said.

Walberg's undergraduate degree is from Allegheny College in Pennsylvania and his medical and doctorate degrees are from Stanford University School of Medicine. He also completed a residency in internal medicine, a fellowship in medical oncology and a postdoctoral fellowship in biochemistry at Stanford. He joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 1993.

Walberg has received numerous awards for scholarship and research, including a National Science Foundation undergraduate student award, a Medical Scientist Training Program award from Stanford, a Howard Hughes Postdoctoral Research Fellowship for Physicians and, most recently, a Life & Health Insurance Basic Medical Research Grant.

President's Research Council co-chairs are Bill and Mary McDermott Cook. Beverly and Bob Blumenthal are PRC membership chairs. The organization was established in 1984 by Cece Smith and Ford Lacy.

New members of the President's Research Council steering committee for 1994-1997, whose terms begin Sept. 1, were announced at the dinner. They are Pat and Ed Ducayet, Alina and Ruben Esquivel, Merle and Richard Hardison, Adelyn and Ed Hoffman, and Chelen and Bill Moore.

Current steering committee members include Susan Abramson, Charlene and Tom Marsh, Ellen and Conrad Masterson, Tucker Willis, Carole and Jim Young, Cissy and Plack Carr, Margaret Anne Cullum, Marion and Nash Flores, Mary and

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Pat Spillman, and Phyllis and Sandy Sacks.

Outgoing steering committee members are Grace and Bill Hunt, Ann Spillman and Jeff Margolies, and Jane and Otto Wetzel. Eliza Solender and Gary Scott are immediate past co-chairs of the PRC. Carole and Jim Young are co-chairs elect for 1995-1997. Membership co-chairs elect for 1995-1997 are Chelen and Bill Moore.

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