

# SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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## **UT SOUTHWESTERN RECEIVES TOP GRANT FROM HOWARD HUGHES MEDICAL INSTITUTE IN NATIONAL COMPETITION**

DALLAS — January 9, 1996 — UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas has been awarded one of the two largest grants in a new, fiercely competitive \$80 million Research Resources Program for Medical Schools sponsored by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

The \$4 million grant, which will be used to support the research of 10 new assistant professors to be recruited to the medical center, was won in competition with 117 of the nation's 124 accredited medical schools. Among 30 schools winning grant funds, it was equaled only by the University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine.

"To receive the largest award in an open competition judged by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute is a tremendous honor," said Dr. Kern Wildenthal, UT Southwestern president. "This is a clear indication that the scientific community regards UT Southwestern as among the very best research institutions anywhere.

"Most research grants are directed to specific individuals. This award is for a campuswide program. It was made on the recommendation of a panel of some of the country's most respected research scientists who are thoroughly knowledgeable about the quality of research in the country's medical schools."

The new competitive grant program is designed to allow recipients to strengthen their institutions with programs supporting young faculty and pilot studies, maintain and upgrade research facilities, enhance scientific communication and information services, and meet unexpected demands on research budgets.

"Academic medical centers across the country are being squeezed by reductions in patient-care revenues and restrictions on government research spending," said Dr. Purnell W. Choppin, Howard Hughes institute president. "The centers play a critical role in carrying out biomedical research — especially basic research that may not be undertaken in the private

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sector."

Dr. Michael Brown, director of the Erik Jonsson Center for Research in Molecular Genetics and Human Disease and co-winner of the 1985 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine, said: "One important aspect of these funds is that they will help young scientists who are at the most creative and challenging phases of their careers. These funds are like booster rockets that launch these scientists into a very high orbit. Later, we hope that they will become self-propelled."

Said Dr. Al Gilman, chairman of pharmacology and co-winner of the 1994 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine: "A significant part of the success of American medical research is found in the willingness of the private and public sectors to support young investigators. The award from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute reinforces this tradition by making it possible for UT Southwestern and other major medical centers to recruit and develop the next generation of scientists who will find answers to questions we have not even begun to form."

In 1986 UT Southwestern became the 12th academic medical center to house investigators from the Howard Hughes institute. The total number of institutions have grown to 62. Eleven researchers at UT Southwestern are affiliated with the institute, including Dr. Johann Deisenhofer, co-winner of the 1988 Nobel Prize in chemistry for his pioneering work in X-ray crystallography. He is a professor of biochemistry and holder of the Virginia and Edward Linthicum Distinguished Chair in Biomolecular Science.

Southwestern Medical School dean Dr. William Neaves said the new grant program comes at a critical time. "We have created an exceptionally cordial environment at UT Southwestern for young scientists," he said. "This grant from the institute will enable more of the brightest young investigators to establish independent laboratories in a setting that strengthens their chance of success in advancing knowledge of basic biological processes and disease mechanisms."

Neaves said the university hopes to fund 30 new assistant professorships over the next several years and the grant will cover approximately one-third of the costs associated with

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supporting the new faculty as they establish their laboratories and research programs.

The new faculty whose research will receive support from the grant will be selected by a committee, which comprises Neaves, Dr. John P. Perkins, dean of Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and holder of the Rolf and Ute Haberecht Deanship of the UT Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, in Honor of Olga and Max Haberecht and Anna and Hans Schwarz; Dr. Steve McKnight, professor of molecular genetics; and three of UT Southwestern's Nobel laureates: Brown, holder of the W.A. (Monty) Moncrief Distinguished Chair in Cholesterol and Arteriosclerosis Research and the Paul J. Thomas Chair in Medicine; Dr. Joseph Goldstein, chairman of molecular genetics and holder of the Distinguished Chair in Biomedical Science and the Paul J. Thomas Chair in Medicine; and Gilman, holder of the Raymond Willie and Ellen Willie Distinguished Chair in Molecular Neuropharmacology, in Honor of Harold B. Crasilneck, Ph.D.

The schools receiving \$3 million or more were (amounts in millions):

1. The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas	\$4.0
2. University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine	\$4.0
3. Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons	\$3.6
4. Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine	\$3.4
5. Stanford University School of Medicine	\$3.4
6. Albert Einstein College of Medicine	\$3.0
7. University of California, Los Angeles, UCLA School of Medicine	\$3.0
8. Washington University School of Medicine	\$3.0

In addition, three schools received \$2.8 million in awards; two received \$2.6 million; eight received \$2.4 million; and nine received \$2.2 million.

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**Howard Hughes Medical Institute  
Research Resources Program for Medical Schools, 1996 Awards  
(award amounts in millions)**

Albert Einstein College of Medicine	\$3.0
Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine	\$2.4
Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons	\$3.6
Duke University School of Medicine	\$2.2
Harvard Medical School	\$2.2
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine	\$3.4
Northwestern University Medical School	\$2.2
Oregon Health Sciences University School of Medicine	\$2.2
Stanford University School of Medicine	\$3.4
University of Alabama School of Medicine	\$2.4
University of California, Los Angeles, UCLA School of Medicine	\$3.0
University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine	\$2.6
University of California, San Francisco, School of Medicine	\$4.0
University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine	\$2.6
University of Colorado School of Medicine	\$2.4
University of Florida College of Medicine	\$2.2
University of Iowa College of Medicine	\$2.4
University of Massachusetts Medical School	\$2.2
University of New Mexico School of Medicine	\$2.8
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Medicine	\$2.4
University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine	\$2.2
University of Southern California School of Medicine	\$2.2
The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio	\$2.2
<b>The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas</b>	<b>\$4.0</b>
University of Utah School of Medicine	\$2.4
University of Vermont College of Medicine	\$2.4
University of Washington School of Medicine	\$2.8
University of Wisconsin Medical School	\$2.8
Vanderbilt University School of Medicine	\$2.4
Washington University School of Medicine	\$3.0

Source: Howard Hughes Medical Institute