

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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UT SOUTHWESTERN NAMES NEW NORTH CAMPUS PLAZA IN HONOR OF LATE CIVIC LEADER VIN PROTHRO

DALLAS – Feb. 21, 2001 – In tribute to a prominent Dallas civic leader and tireless proponent of medical research and technology, UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas has named a new campus plaza for C. Vincent Prothro, the late chairman and chief executive officer of Dallas Semiconductor Corp.

Prothro, who died in November, was a noted leader whose volunteer and philanthropic efforts were instrumental in the development of a number of key projects at the medical center.

The new C. Vincent Prothro Plaza and Gardens connects three recently completed structures on UT Southwestern's North Campus – the Simmons, Hamon and Seay biomedical buildings. Prothro's exhaustive volunteer efforts were paramount to securing the land for this recently developed portion of the medical center's campus. The acreage, which was donated by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, was acquired largely thanks to Prothro's "persuasion and leadership," said Dr. Kern Wildenthal, president of UT Southwestern.

The plaza will overlook the O'Donnell Grove on the northeast corner of Inwood Road and Harry Hines Boulevard, with views of the Eugene McDermott Academic Administration Building on the medical center's South Campus. Prothro served on the boards of both the O'Donnell Foundation and the Eugene McDermott Foundation, which for decades have been staunch supporters of UT Southwestern.

"Words cannot express how those of us who knew and loved Vin felt when we heard about the plaza being named in his honor," said Mary McDermott Cook, president of the McDermott Foundation. "Vin was fully committed to UT Southwestern and worked with great intelligence and integrity – and a twinkle in his eye – to accomplish whatever he set his mind to do. The naming of the plaza is a meaningful way to honor his memory, which will always be a priceless part of Dallas history."

In addition to the acquisition of the North Campus land, Prothro, who died unexpectedly at age 58, was a key player in the success of many other projects at UT Southwestern. He personally raised \$15 million in venture capital for Dallas Biomedical Corp., which invested its funds in start-up biotech initiatives at the medical center in the 1980s and early 1990s.

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“Vin had remarkable foresight,” Wildenthal said. “He recognized that biotechnology was a key to the future of medicine and campaigned tirelessly to ensure that others understood and supported its significance. His loyalty and leadership were unsurpassed.”

Prothro also served for more than a decade as chairman of the Friends of the Center for Human Nutrition, which contributed more than \$2 million under his leadership. He also was a leading member of the steering committee of UT Southwestern’s Fund for Molecular Research campaign, which raised more than \$160 million for the medical center.

Prothro and his wife, Caren, have also made a number of generous personal gifts to UT Southwestern over the years.

“Vin’s vision and persistence made him invaluable to those whose lives he touched,” said Peter O’Donnell, president of the O’Donnell Foundation. “He saw great potential for the medical center and backed his ideas with immeasurable dedication.”

Prothro, who held degrees from Stanford University and Harvard Business School, was a native of Wichita Falls. He moved to Dallas in 1966 to begin his career at Texas Instruments, where he was among the early pioneers of the semiconductor industry. In 1969 he helped found Mostek Corp. Prothro subsequently launched Dallas Semiconductor Corp. in 1984, which he led until his death.

Vin and Caren Prothro have been avid supporters of a variety of civic and professional organizations, including the Dallas Museum of Art, Southern Methodist University, Dallas Zoological Society, the Dallas Foundation, the Salvation Army, and the Governor’s Committee on Science and Technology.

“Our family is very excited about the new plaza and the meaning behind it being named for Vin,” said Caren Prothro. “So much of Vin’s enthusiasm about being involved with UT Southwestern surrounded the growth of the North Campus, so it is especially wonderful that his name will be linked in such a special way to that land.”

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