

News

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ARLINGTON--Dr. Charles Cameron Sprague, president of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas, will retire on Aug. 31, 1986, UT Board of Regents Chairman Jess Hay announced here Thursday.

Dr. Sprague has guided Southwestern Medical School and the UT Health Science Center for nearly 20 years--longer than any other chief executive--during which time the institutions underwent dramatic expansion and development. "This has been a remarkable career," Chairman Hay declared. "Not only has Charles Sprague built ninety million dollars worth of facilities in Dallas, he has assembled one of the finest scientific faculties in the nation. And he has provided effective medical leadership for his own community, for the state and for the nation." Dr. Sprague will remain with the Dallas Health Science Center as a consultant for five months after his retirement. James W. Aston, chairman of the board of trustees, and James W. Keay, president of Southwestern Medical Foundation, have stated that at that time Dr. Sprague will become chief operating officer of Southwestern Medical Foundation. The Dallas foundation created Southwestern Medical College in 1943 and since then has been a major philanthropic supporter of the medical school and the UT Health Science Center, which was created in 1972.

Commenting on his decision to retire, Dr. Sprague said: "My tenure as institutional head at the UTHSCD since 1967 could not have been more satisfying and rewarding. The support of the Board of Regents, the U.T. System Administration, the Legislature and the Dallas community has made it possible for the Health Science Center to emerge as one of the leading biomedical institutions in the country--certainly among the top 10 percent. A large share of the credit for this achievement is due the outstanding faculty which was made possible by the above support. These are very exciting times in the history of medicine and this is a very exciting institutional environment for the School of Allied Health Sciences as components

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"Although I am retiring from my position at the health science center, I am most anxious to continue my efforts to not only see this institution continue its remarkable growth and development, but to see the Dallas medical community gain the recognition it deserves as a major medical referral center. We have most of the resources including outstanding hospitals and a talented, sophisticated group of physicians. What we do not have here is the image that these resources justify.

"I have been most fortunate to have been offered the opportunity to join the Southwestern Medical Foundation as its chief operating officer upon retirement from the health science center. In this capacity I will be able not only to continue my efforts to support the health science center in its further development but it will also allow me to address the broader issues of developing the entire Dallas medical community. The foundation was responsible for the creation of the Southwestern Medical College in 1943 and it has continued to be a major supporter of the institution throughout its history. It played a vital role in the major campus building program some 15 years ago.

"At a time when the health science center is facing reduced levels of state appropriations and the federal government is cutting back on support of biomedical research, it will be increasingly important that additional private support be obtained for special initiatives. Private philanthropy has been instrumental in the institution achieving its present position among the best of the nation's biomedical institutions.

"I look forward with great anticipation to joining an organization that has as its mission the continued support of the health science center as well as other community programs. This will permit the center to achieve its full potential and the community to answer health care needs of the people of Dallas and the region.

"I am most grateful and appreciative to have had the opportunity to serve the health science center during a critical phase in its development. I am confident that with adequate support it will continue to grow and prosper and become an increasingly meaningful asset to Dallas," Dr. Sprague concluded.

The son of a former Dallas mayor, Dr. Sprague received a business degree from SMU and then took an M.D. degree from the UT Medical Branch at Galveston in 1943. After internship in the Navy and a residency in New Orleans, he became a faculty member and finally dean of Tulane University School of Medicine.

Sprague returned to Dallas July 1, 1967, to become dean of Southwestern Medical School. During the period into the mid 1970s, he led a \$40 million building program which enabled the school to double the size of its medical classes to more than 200 each. In 1972, the UT Board of Regents established The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas with the medical school, the Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and the School of Allied Health Sciences as components.

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Additional facilities adding to nearly \$50 million have been built since the original program. And there are current plans by a private philanthropic group to build a \$40 million University Hospital to augment the medical school's teaching and research programs.

Sprague, a hematologist, has been chairman of the Association of American Medical Colleges and currently is chairman of the Association of Academic Health Centers.