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EDITOR'S NOTE: Broadcast-quality video and audio from the UT Southwestern announcement will be available by visiting http://www.digitalnewsrelease.com/?q=UTSW_Simmons_NCIGold any time after 3:30 p.m., CDT on Aug. 4, 2010.

EMBARGOED UNTIL NOON CDT WEDNESDAY, AUG. 4, 2010

UT Southwestern's Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center earns 'gold standard' National Cancer Institute designation

DALLAS – Aug. 4, 2010 – The Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center at UT Southwestern Medical Center has attained National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation, an elite distinction held by only the top-tier cancer centers nationwide.

The Simmons Cancer Center is the first and only medical center in North Texas to attain this prestigious status, which the NCI bestows upon the nation's top cancer centers in recognition of innovative research and excellence in patient care. There are now 66 such centers in the U.S.; other designated centers in Texas are in Houston and San Antonio.

"NCI cancer center designation is a national benchmark, and our selection provides welcome confirmation of the exceptional quality of cancer discovery and patient care at UT Southwestern," said Dr. Daniel K. Podolsky, president of the medical center. "It places the Simmons Cancer Center among the most elite centers in the country for advancing cancer research and providing cancer care."

As an NCI-designated center, the Simmons Cancer Center will receive a \$7.5 million support grant over the next five years, which complements the \$24.4 million in NCI grants that are currently active at UT Southwestern.

The National Cancer Institute is the world's largest organization solely dedicated to cancer research. It also is part of the National Institutes of Health, the primary federal agency responsible for conducting and supporting medical research. Through basic and clinical biomedical research and training, the NCI leads a national effort to eliminate suffering and death due to cancer. With designation by the NCI, the Simmons Cancer Center will now be able to provide cancer patients access to promising new cancer treatments only available through the network of these NCI centers.

The Simmons Cancer Center was established in 1988 through generous donations from Dallas

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL CENTER AT DALLAS

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philanthropist Harold C. Simmons and his family foundation. Mr. Simmons, his wife Annette, and his daughters Lisa Simmons and Serena Simmons Connelly, have been enthusiastic supporters of the cancer center and its goal of attaining NCI designation. To date, the Simmonses have given and pledged more than \$100 million to enhance cancer programs at UT Southwestern.

In addition to the Simmonses, more than 100 North Texas families and foundations, including many donations made through Southwestern Medical Foundation, have made major gifts to support UT Southwestern's cancer programs over the years.

Clinical care for cancer is provided by UT Southwestern faculty of the Simmons Cancer Center at UT Southwestern University Hospitals & Clinics, Parkland Memorial Hospital and Children's Medical Center Dallas, all of which are included in the NCI designation. Faculty also provide cancer services at the Dallas VA Medical Center, Methodist Richardson Cancer Center and Fort Worth's Moncrief Cancer Institute.

Dr. James K.V. Willson, director of the Simmons Cancer Center and associate dean for oncology programs at UT Southwestern, joined UT Southwestern in 2004 and began the process for securing NCI designation.

"Over the past five years UT Southwestern has made great strides in bringing together all the elements that collectively comprise an outstanding cancer center," Dr. Willson said. "NCI designation is the gold standard for elite cancer programs."

Under Dr. Willson's leadership the center has built upon the success and reputation of several nationally recognized cancer programs already in place at UT Southwestern. His efforts include the recruitment of more than 70 top cancer specialists to develop programs that complement the existing research and clinical expertise, as exemplified by Dr. Joan Schiller, chief of hematology/oncology and an internationally renowned lung cancer expert who joined the cancer center as deputy director in 2006. She and Dr. Michael White, professor of cell biology and associate director for basic science at the cancer center, have been key partners in the center's progress.

"The future of cancer care is the ability to make discoveries that can quickly impact patient care and cancer prevention," Dr. Willson said. "We have a discovery engine of amazing depth that exists in very few other places. What we've been able to do in the last five years is link that engine to our clinical teams so that we can provide not only exquisite patient care and access to the latest treatment and technology, but also the thinking that comes from having a comprehensive care team

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for every patient.”

Dr. Podolsky said: “UT Southwestern has made an institutional commitment to innovation, to investing in new technologies, to recruiting the best medical minds, and to combining our many assets and focusing them on cancer. The NCI designation is a welcome and fitting recognition of those efforts.”

Dr. Francisco Cigarroa, chancellor of the UT System, said: “This recognition is a well-deserved tribute to UT Southwestern’s outstanding clinicians and researchers who have dedicated their careers to conquering cancer and also to the visionary generosity of the Harold Simmons family and many other selfless donors. Of course, the greatest benefit will be for the patients and their families as we improve their lives through prevention, research and clinical care.”

With NCI designation, UT Southwestern enhances its ability to provide patients living in much of the central U.S., including Oklahoma and southern Kansas; western Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana; and eastern New Mexico and Colorado, access to innovative treatments available only at NCI-designated centers.

Visit simmonscancercenter.org to learn more about clinical services for cancer at UT Southwestern.

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