

news THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT DALLAS

southwestern medical school • graduate school of biomedical sciences • school of allied health sciences

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DALLAS--Eugene McDermott of Dallas has made a gift to The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School for the establishment of a Center for Human Growth and Development, UT Chancellor Charles A. LeMaistre has announced.

The new center, including an academic chair, is an expansion of present McDermott-sponsored research at Southwestern which already has investigated theories that certain biological disorders can be predicted in people with common growth and body characteristics.

President Charles C. Sprague of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas said the new facility will be known as the Eugene McDermott Center for the Study of Human Growth and Development.

Chancellor LeMaistre said the center's overall purpose will be to study the role of structure and function of the human body, with particular emphasis on their relationship to growth and development. He predicted that "clinical observation and research, particularly in the medical school's Pediatrics Department, may open new horizons in the treatment and prevention of disease because of known prediction capability.

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"It is anticipated that knowledge gained in the center will be utilized in the training of physicians and thus reassert an emphasis on the consideration of the structure and function of human beings in the relationship of human performance and to disease processes."

In essence, scientists and doctors at Southwestern will continue to measure human beings and to study growth patterns from birth. With parents' permission, for example, photographs will be taken periodically, both sides of the body will be measured, as will muscle development and performance. In addition, intelligence and other tests related to the maturing process will be correlated.

As an example of research already conducted by scientists in the field, similarities in body form have been noted in women who have early cancer of the breast. Those who are prone to have pernicious anemia often have long ear lobes and are prematurely grey.

The new center was approved by The University of Texas System Board of Regents at its recent San Antonio meeting. At that time, Chairman John Peace said an announcement would be made later when details of the gift were finalized.

Included was a gift made through Southwestern Medical Foundation for operation of the center, as well as the separate gift to the medical school for the endowed chair.

From an organizational standpoint, the new center will have departmental status within the medical school with the director reporting to the dean of the school.