

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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UT SOUTHWESTERN CHAIR HONORS LONGEST-SERVING MEDICAL SCHOOL DEAN, DR. A.J. GILL

Dallas – July 31, 2000 – UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas has established the Atticus James Gill, M.D., Chair in Medical Science with a \$500,000 endowment to honor the longest-serving dean in the history of Southwestern Medical School.

An internationally recognized pathologist and charter member of UT Southwestern's faculty, Gill served as medical school dean from 1954 to 1967, a time of enormous growth and change for medical education in Texas. During his tenure the medical school gained increased financial backing and significantly expanded its campus, faculty and student body.

Gill, a renowned scholar and academic, joined Southwestern Medical School in 1943 as an assistant professor of pathology and soon became the school's primary lecturer on the subject. He was named a full professor and became associate dean in 1950. He was named assistant dean for building and development in 1952. Two years later, in 1954, he began his term as dean and chief administrative officer.

"Jim Gill led UT Southwestern during a pivotal period in its history," said Dr. Kern Wildenthal, president of UT Southwestern. "It was during his time as the chief administrator that the institution's programs began gaining national and international prominence. His judgment, integrity and dignity are ingrained in the foundation of the medical school, and his legacy will endure."

Dr. Vernie Stembridge, chairman emeritus of pathology at UT Southwestern and a close colleague and friend, said, "The medical school achieved remarkable stability under Jim Gill. He created a foundation upon which future generations could build and remained dedicated to

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bringing the best physicians and academics in the country to the medical school.”

Upon his retirement in 1977, Gill was named professor emeritus of pathology and was honored by his colleagues, who established the A.J. Gill Professorship in Pathology. He was killed in 1979 at age 65, in a tractor accident at his family ranch.

Dr. Robert J. Alpern, a world-renowned kidney specialist and current dean of Southwestern Medical School, will hold the newly established Gill chair, which will always be held by the dean of the medical school.

"One of the keys to UT Southwestern's success has been strong leadership with longevity. Although I did not have the honor of knowing Dr. Gill personally, I have been aware of his reputation as a distinguished leader throughout my career at the medical center," said Alpern. "I am highly honored to be selected as the first holder of this chair and am enormously grateful for the support it will lend our research efforts."

Alpern joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 1987 as chief of nephrology. He was named dean in 1998, at which time he became responsible for overseeing the education of about 800 medical students and more than 1,000 clinical residents. A member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation and the Association of American Physicians, Alpern also works to fulfill the educational, clinical and scientific missions of the medical-school faculty.

Alpern, who also holds the Ruth W. and Milton P. Levy Sr. Chair in Molecular Nephrology, is a 1976 graduate of the University of Chicago Division of the Biological Sciences Pritzker School of Medicine. His medical research has been published in journals throughout the world.

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