

News

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****NME funds \$50,000 fellowship for
heart research at UT Southwestern

National Medical Enterprises, Inc. (NME) will fund a \$50,000 two-year post-doctoral fellowship in cardiovascular science at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

The fellowship, called the National Medical Enterprises Foundation Fellowship in Cardiovascular Science, will prepare an outstanding young cardiologist to move freely between the clinical setting and the molecular biology research laboratory, using the findings in one milieu to solve problems in the other, said UT Southwestern President Kern Wildenthal, M.D., Ph.D.

"The NME cardiology fellow will have the opportunity to work with distinguished faculty clinicians and basic scientists at UT Southwestern, who recognize the importance of approaching cardiovascular problems through a basic understanding of the molecular biology of the cardiovascular system," Wildenthal said.

The preeminence of the researchers is evinced by their election to the National Academy of Sciences, the Royal Society of Great Britain, and other prestigious societies, he said.

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Three laboratories in which the fellow can work include those of the following scientists:

--Joseph Sambrook, Ph.D., and Mary Jane Gething, Ph.D., who are engaged in research using site-directed mutagenesis to study the relationship between the structure and function of human tissue plasminogen activator (t-PA). The researchers also are analyzing the elements that control expression of the t-PA gene, to determine how transcription of the gene increases in response to extra-cellular thrombin.

--Alfred Gilman, M.D, Ph.D. and Elliott Ross, Ph.D., who are studying the molecular regulation and interactions of the beta receptor, G proteins and adenylate cyclase systems, which determine how a cell responds to hormones.

--James T. Stull, Ph.D., who is studying the molecular properties of myosin light chain kinase and protein phosphates from cardiac and vascular smooth muscle.

Basic research will be coupled with "an outstanding clinical cardiovascular science program under the direction of one of America's most eminent cardiologists and investigators, James T. Willerson, M.D.," said Wildenthal. Among the clinical research projects are studies aimed at:

--Determining mechanisms responsible for the conversion from chronic to acute ischemic heart disease syndromes;

--Elucidating and defining neuro-mechanisms responsible for the regulation of cardiovascular responses;

--Defining the cellular alterations responsible for the development of irreversible myocyte damage during myocardial ischemia.

NME executive vice president Peter de Wetter praised the medical center and its cardiology research.

"National Medical Enterprises appreciates the opportunity to join with the center to support a young physician-scientist who will add to the important

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research underway," de Wetter said.

J. Sloan Leonard, M.D., a Dallas pathologist who currently chairs the NME Physicians Advisory Board, played an instrumental role in obtaining the grant. A 1965 graduate of Southwestern Medical School, Leonard directs the pathology departments at two NME health-care facilities in Dallas: RHD Memorial Medical Center and Dallas Rehabilitation Institute.

Other area NME facilities include Doctors Hospital of Dallas, Brookhaven Psychiatric Pavilion in Dallas, Trinity Medical Center in Carrollton, Brookhaven Nursing Center in Carrollton, and Psychiatric Institute of Fort Worth.

Los Angeles-based NME is the nation's second largest health services company. NME owns, operates or manages more than 500 acute, psychiatric and physical rehabilitative hospitals, long-term facilities and substance-abuse treatment centers throughout the United States and internationally.

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Note: The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas comprises Southwestern Medical School, Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School.