

News

Office of Medical Information
The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas
5323 Harry Hines Boulevard Dallas, Texas 75235-9060 214/688-3404

November 10, 1988

CONTACT: Susan Rutherford
Office: 214/688-3404
Home: 214/349-7820

****UT Southwestern initiates campus expansion

DALLAS--The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas embarked on a major campus expansion plan with ground-breaking ceremonies Nov. 2 for the Mary Nell and Ralph B. Rogers Magnetic Resonance Center.

The 24,000-square-foot clinical and basic research facility is the first structure scheduled for the new 30-acre North Campus at Exchange Park. A master plan for the campus proposes construction of more than two million square feet of facilities over the next 20 years. Total project cost, estimated in 1988 dollars, will be \$307.4 million.

The ground-breaking event featured the planting of a red oak donated by the Dallas Arboretum near the site of the building named in honor of longtime Dallas civic leader Ralph Rogers and his wife, Mary Nell. The couple and UT Southwestern President Dr. Kern Wildenthal were joined at the ceremony by Larry Martin, MacArthur Foundation vice president for real estate, Dallas Mayor Annette Strauss, Dallas County Judge Lee Jackson, Dr. Charles Mullins, representing the UT System, and other members of the medical and local communities.

"The initiation of UT Southwestern's expansion on our new North Campus comes at a propitious time -- just as we have had our third Nobel Prize winner in three years," Wildenthal said. "Our research activities are growing rapidly in size and in quality, and it is vital that we construct new facilities for our major programs, such as magnetic resonance."

The \$4.8-million Magnetic Resonance Center will house the powerful magnets used by UT Southwestern scientists and physicians. Magnetic resonance (MR) imaging provides detailed pictures of internal body structures without radiation. The newly developed MR spectroscopy can monitor the biologic function of organs and tissues. Established just five years ago, UT Southwestern's MR imaging and spectroscopy program is at the forefront of this new diagnostic technology. Information gained by MR techniques can yield significant clues in treating and preventing diseases and injury.

The one-story MR Center will be home to seven research magnet units and one clinical magnet unit. Each unit includes a magnet, ancillary computer and cooling equipment. The building also will contain offices, conference rooms and laboratories for the faculty and staff. Currently, the three largest MR units occupy a leased building about a mile from campus. Smaller units are located in other campus sites, resulting in a great deal of travel time for researchers.

Architects for the comprehensive MR center are Harwood K. Smith & Partners. The Cadence Group of Irving is contractor for the project, which is scheduled for completion in 1989.

Dr. Robert Parkey is chairman of UT Southwestern's radiology department. Dr. Ray Nunnally is director of biomedical MR research, and Dr. Ron Peshock is director of MRI within the Rogers Center.

(More)

The recently completed UT Southwestern master plan utilizes the land given by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation in December 1987. It responds to the medical center's explosive growth and critical need for more research space.

Research at UT Southwestern has increased more than 20 percent a year since 1984. Even if the medical center's growth rate slowed to around 7 percent a year, UT Southwestern could saturate all the projected space on the North Campus by the turn of the century, according to Dr. William Neaves, executive vice president of academic affairs.

"Southwestern will have difficulty in the next decade bringing on research space fast enough to keep from choking off the natural growth of its research programs," Neaves said.

The master plan resulted from a 10-month study to determine the best use of the MacArthur land. The North Campus is located diagonally across the intersection of Harry Hines Boulevard and Inwood Road from the main campus. Besides the MR center, the master plan calls for construction of six research towers, a student services building, energy plant and underground parking roofed by terraced garden plazas. An initial flood reclamation project will provide drainage for the site and create a greenbelt park.

Some of the new space will allow the medical center to build research programs in cancer biology, neuroscience and developmental biology as well as relocate "landlocked" research programs on the main campus. This also will open up space on the main campus for expansion of clinical programs. A mixture of both clinical and basic sciences is expected on both campuses.

Consultants for the North Campus Master Plan were headed by Pat Spillman of F&S Partners Incorporated, architects. The university was represented by Neaves, and John Davis of The University of Texas System. Other consultants included Johnson, Johnson, & Roy/inc., planning and landscape architecture; Huitt-Zollars Inc., civil engineering; DeShazo, Starek & Tang Inc., traffic engineers; and Gaynor & Sirmen Inc., electrical engineers.

###

Distribution: AC,AC1,AH,AI,TEX,SL

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.