

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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GIFT HONORING FORT WORTH DERMATOLOGIST FUNDS RESEARCH LABORATORY AT UT SOUTHWESTERN

DALLAS – Dec. 5, 1996 – A new laboratory where scientists will study the molecular mysteries of skin diseases has been named for Dr. Thomas Shields, a Fort Worth dermatologist with deep roots at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

In 1991 Nancy Lee and Perry R. Bass of Fort Worth gave \$50 million to their favorite institutions, including \$1 million to Harris Methodist Health Foundation to honor Shields, who was Perry Bass' dermatologist. The Basses left it up to Shields to decide how to distribute the interest income from the gift, as long as it would be used for research.

Shields chose to give the money -- more than \$170,000 so far -- to UT Southwestern's Department of Dermatology.

The new T.L. Shields Laboratory for Molecular Dermatology will allow scientists to investigate the role of genes in diseases such as skin cancer, lupus and psoriasis.

"Our commitment is to our patients and to understanding their diseases," said Dr. Paul Bergstresser, chairman of dermatology and the Dr. J.B. Shelmire Professor in Dermatology. "If we can understand the genes, then we believe we can find a way to correct their deficiencies that cause disease. We are grateful to the Basses and to Dr. Shields for fostering this opportunity."

Creation of the Shields laboratory has enabled Bergstresser to recruit Dr. Kiyoshi Ariizumi, assistant professor of dermatology, who is examining the effects of ultraviolet light on the function of cells. By understanding the genetic events that follow exposure to ultraviolet radiation, Ariizumi hopes to find a way to promote the beneficial effects of

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ultraviolet radiation while diminishing its detrimental effects.

The laboratory also has enabled other UT Southwestern scientists to attract research grants.

"This gift has stimulated research that has brought in competitive federal grants totaling more than \$1.8 million," said Dr. William Neaves, dean of Southwestern Medical School. "It has spread beyond the Department of Dermatology to at least 10 other departments on campus involved in skin disease research. It's already very apparent that Dr. Shields' intent has been reached."

Shields' allegiance to UT Southwestern goes back nearly 60 years. In 1940 he was an intern at Parkland Hospital and after military service returned to UT Southwestern for specialty training in dermatology. Although Shields established a private practice in Fort Worth, he was on the UT Southwestern dermatology clinical faculty for most of his career.

"I am honored by the generosity and the benevolence of Perry and Nancy Lee Bass, who had the vision to advance medical and scientific knowledge for the benefit of mankind," Shields said. "The hallmark of the Bass story is excellence, and I believe the same can be said of the Department of Dermatology at UT Southwestern."

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