

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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TEXAS RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION RENAMES AWARD FOR LATE DR. MARION ZETZMAN OF UT SOUTHWESTERN

DALLAS – Sept. 17, 2002 – The Texas Rural Health Association's Person Who Made a Difference Award has been re-christened in honor of former UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas faculty member Dr. Marion Zetzman.

Zetzman, who was vice chairman of the Department of Family Practice and Community Medicine from 1984 until his death in 1996, will also be named the first winner of the annual Marion Zetzman Award. The award is traditionally presented to "the person who has made a difference in Texas rural health."

For the first time, the UT System is joining the TRHA in sponsoring the award, which will be presented to Zetzman's widow, Sarah Pratt Zetzman, and son, Philip, both of Dallas. The award's presentation will be made Sept. 19 at the TRHA's annual meeting in Lubbock.

Ramsey Longbotham, TRHA president, said Zetzman's work for better health care for the people of Texas is well-known in the world of rural health as well as in academia.

"We are proud to give this tribute to him by not only naming the award for him but also presenting the first award in his name to his family members," Longbotham said. "Everyone working over the years to improve the state of the health of people in rural areas knows about Marion Zetzman's steadfastness in pushing for an agency charged with this task."

Zetzman helped found the Center for Rural Health Initiatives, now the Texas State Office of Rural Health. Zetzman served as first chairman of the agency while continuing his academic duties at UT Southwestern. The state office administers programs and services designed to ensure health and well-being in rural Texas communities.

Zetzman, whose own roots were rural, was a native Texan from Roscoe. He joined UT Southwestern in 1973 as acting chairman of family practice and community medicine. After the late Dr. William Ross took over the chairmanship, the two worked as a team to better the state's rural and urban health care. During his UT Southwestern tenure, Zetzman also was a professor

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of obstetrics and gynecology and served as health-policy consultant to Dr. Charles Mullins, former executive vice chancellor for health affairs for the UT System.

"I knew Marion Zetzman for many years, and he was a leader. He was instrumental in making a case to the state Legislature for founding and funding the much needed Center for Rural Health Initiatives," said Mullins, now professor of internal medicine at UT Southwestern and holder of the J. Fred Schoellkopf Jr. Chair in Cardiology.

Dr. James C. Guckian, the UT System's acting executive vice chancellor for health affairs, said, "Dr. Zetzman was a champion for improving the health of the underserved, especially those in the rural areas. The University of Texas System is proud that Dr. Zetzman was a faculty member at UT Southwestern while also serving the health needs of the citizens of Texas."

Zetzman graduated from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene before earning a master's degree in public health from Tulane University. He completed his doctorate at the School of Public Health at the UT Health Science Center at Houston. Before joining the UT Southwestern faculty, Zetzman was director of medical planning for the Texas Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid) at the Texas Department of Human Services and also was a member of the Governor's Office of Comprehensive Health Planning under Gov. Preston Smith from 1969 to 1972.

At the time of Zetzman's death, UT Southwestern President Dr. Kern Wildenthal said, "Marion was outstanding in his professional activities, including those aimed at improving rural health in Texas, and he was equally outstanding as a human being. His contributions to our medical center's progress and to the cause of rural health care in the state were immense."

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