

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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GIFT ESTABLISHES BARTTER PROFESSORSHIP IN VITAMIN D RESEARCH

DALLAS — July 14, 1994 — Nearly 30 years ago, a leading researcher at the National Institutes of Health took the time and made the effort to teach a bright young physician named Dr. Charles Y.C. Pak how to do clinical research. The late Dr. Frederic C. Bartter also encouraged Pak to explore his own hypotheses, inspiring him to pursue groundbreaking kidney-stone research.

Now, Pak is honoring his mentor, colleague and friend by establishing the Frederic C. Bartter Professorship in Vitamin D Research at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. Bartter was among the first to do clinical research on vitamin D.

Pak's gift of \$50,000 will be matched by the Fund for Molecular Research challenge fund to endow the professorship for a faculty member in the Robert T. Hayes Center for Mineral Metabolism Research, which Pak directs. The professorship will support vitamin D research at the molecular level.

Earlier this year, Pak pledged \$50,000 to endow a professorship in bone biophysics in honor of his mother, Wechun Pak.

"I would like to think that I am carrying on Dr. Bartter's tradition of superior clinical research," Pak said. "I am confident that the recipient of this award will take the tradition of fine clinical research forward from me."

Bartter was head of the endocrinology branch of what was then the NIH National Heart Institute when he hired Pak as a senior investigator in 1965. Pak had just completed two years of postdoctoral research in physical chemistry at the NIH and wanted to return to caring for patients.

"Dr. Bartter showed me that I could do both research and patient care," Pak recalled. "He taught me the basics of clinical research, that it ought to be based on hypothesis-testing and supported as far as possible by laboratory validation."

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"He also taught me to write. He was an incredible master of the English language. And once he was convinced that I was capable, he allowed me to explore my own ideas. That's how I got into stone-disease research."

When Bartter took a year's sabbatical in 1970-71, he left Pak in charge as acting chief of the endocrinology branch. "I learned a lot about leadership and responsibilities during that year," said Pak, who now directs a staff of 50 and manages an annual budget of more than \$4 million.

Pak left the NIH in 1972 to establish a clinical research center at UT Southwestern. Bartter stayed on until he retired and moved to San Antonio, where he taught at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio until his death in 1983.

The health science center at San Antonio established the Frederic C. Bartter Lectureship in his honor and invited Pak to give the first Bartter lecture. In 1988 the Society of Bone and Mineral Research awarded Pak the Frederic C. Bartter Memorial Award for his clinical research.

"When they worked together, my husband recognized that Dr. Pak was indeed a gifted investigator," said his widow, Mrs. Jane Bartter of San Antonio. "In later years he became proud of the many contributions Dr. Pak made to clinical investigation, particularly in the field of calcium metabolism.

"Research was life's breath to Fred. I know he would have been thrilled by this professorship, which will advance scientific investigation. He came to love Texas and would be pleased that the professorship was established here."

UT Southwestern President Dr. Kern Wildenthal said: "Dr. Pak has made major academic contributions to UT Southwestern, and now he has made major financial contributions as well. We are truly fortunate to have such a talented, dedicated and loyal person on our faculty."

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