

# SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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## BONE BIOPHYSICS PROFESSORSHIP HONORS UT SOUTHWESTERN RESEARCHER'S MOTHER

DALLAS — January 12, 1994 — Wechun Pak inspired her son to pursue a career in medicine and motivated him to focus his efforts on osteoporosis research. Now a world-renowned mineral metabolism researcher at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, Dr. Charles Pak has pledged \$50,000 to endow a professorship in his mother's honor.

The gift will be matched by the Fund for Molecular Research, a \$150 million campaign now under way at UT Southwestern, to create the Wechun Pak Professorship of Bone Biophysics. Dr. Peter Antich, professor of radiology, has been appointed first holder of the professorship.

"To have this perpetual honor for Dr. Pak's mother at UT Southwestern is particularly meaningful for all of us who know she inspired his lifelong dedication to medicine and research in the area of mineral metabolism-related diseases," said Dr. Kern Wildenthal, UT Southwestern president. "We are proud that he has chosen to commemorate her in this manner. It is especially significant when people associated with UT Southwestern contribute to our fund-raising efforts."

Said Pak of his 88-year-old mother, who lives in Hawaii, "She's a most unusual woman. She was a midwife and an absolutely superb one. Her compassion and dedication made such an impression on me that I don't remember ever thinking about doing anything but going into medicine."

In later years Pak's mother fell victim to osteoporosis, suffering several

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spinal fractures and a hip fracture. "Her suffering was a personal motivation to me to work hard to find better ways to treat and prevent osteoporosis," Pak said. Pak has developed a popular calcium supplement (Citracal), and he is now finding ways to replace lost bone with stronger bone in patients with osteoporosis.

Pak is director of the Robert T. Hayes Center for Mineral Metabolism Research at UT Southwestern and holder of the Charles Pak Distinguished Chair in Mineral Metabolism and the Donald W. Seldin Professorship in Clinical Investigation.

Antich collaborates with Pak in developing imaging technology uniquely suited to the mineral metabolism center's osteoporosis research. "His development of an ultrasound technique to measure bone strength was critical in validating our treatment approach in osteoporosis," Pak said.

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