

# SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

Media Contact: Morgan Lyons  
(214) 648-3404  
or e-mail: MLyons@mednet.swmed.edu

## LOWE FOUNDATION GIFT ESTABLISHES PEDIATRIC NEURO-ONCOLOGY PROFESSORSHIP AT UT SOUTHWESTERN

DALLAS — December 1, 1995 — A \$100,000 gift from the Lowe Foundation of Houston will fund important new genetic research in pediatric neuro-oncology at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

The foundation's contribution to Southwestern Medical Foundation will establish the Lowe Foundation Professorship in Pediatric Neuro-Oncology at UT Southwestern. Dr. Perry Nisen, associate professor of pediatrics, is the first holder of the professorship.

Erma Lowe and her daughter Mary Ralph Lowe established the Lowe Foundation in 1988 to consolidate support for their numerous charitable activities. According to treasurer Geoffrey Perrin, the foundation is "primarily interested in projects benefiting women and children throughout Texas."

UT Southwestern supporter Diana Strauss of Dallas is one of six trustees of the foundation. "She presented the UT Southwestern story to the foundation," Perrin explained.

UT Southwestern president Dr. Kern Wildenthal said, "Mary Ralph Lowe and trustees of the Lowe Foundation are highly motivated to do something about medical problems faced by children. We are grateful for their support of Dr. Nisen's research into brain tumors and look forward to a long relationship with them."

Nisen, who joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 1989, is primarily interested in the treatment of children with malignant brain tumors, one of the most common forms of childhood cancer. Only about 40 percent of children with brain tumors can be treated effectively with surgery alone. The majority of patients must undergo a combination of

(MORE)

## LOWE FOUNDATION — 2

therapies, including radiation and chemotherapy.

Brain-tumor treatment also is highly problematic and those who are treated successfully often must contend with lifelong consequences such as paralysis, blindness, mental retardation and learning disabilities.

"The trustees of the Lowe Foundation have a deep understanding of, and concern for, the problems faced by kids with malignant brain tumors," Nisen said.

Nisen, who also directs the National Institutes of Health-funded Southwestern Brain Tumor Research Center, said the Lowe Foundation gift "will enable me to continue translational studies to develop gene therapy as a means of treating patients with neoplasms for which there is no other effective therapy. Our laboratory is working to find new ways that are more effective and less toxic to treat children. We think the development of gene therapy — where genes are introduced into the brain tumor to inhibit its growth — is an important new treatment tool."

Some of the other projects supported by the Lowe Foundation include the Warm Place in Dallas, the Casa De Esperanza, the Women's Home of Houston, Texas Hearing and Service Dogs, and Cook Children's Medical Center in Fort Worth.

###