

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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DR. GEORGE A. ROBERTS DONATES \$1 MILLION TO FUND LIVER-DISEASE TREATMENT AND RESEARCH CENTER

DALLAS -August 11, 1999 To further liver-disease treatment and research efforts, Dr. George A. Roberts has donated \$1 million to UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas in honor of his late wife, Jeanne Marie Polk Roberts.

The gift will help establish the Comprehensive Clinical and Research Center for Liver Diseases at UT Southwestern, to be directed by Dr. William Lee, a professor of internal medicine and an internationally recognized expert on viral hepatitis and acute liver failure.

Before Mrs. Roberts' death in April from liver cancer, she and her husband discussed making a gift to the center to thank Lee, who treated Mrs. Roberts during the last year of her life, and to foster research into a disease that had greatly impacted the couple.

"Jeanne and I simply wanted to find a way to help people in the same position we were in," said Roberts, the retired president, chairman and chief executive officer of Teledyne, a California-based diversified manufacturing company. "We were incredibly impressed with the efforts of Dr. Lee and could think of no better way to honor him and all those struck with liver disease than to support his outstanding work."

Roberts, who received his doctorate in metallurgy from Carnegie-Mellon University in 1942, is a member of the national Academy of Engineering, a fellow of the American Society for Metals, and a recipient of the Carnegie-Mellon Distinguished Achievement Award. Widely published on the topic of tool steels, Roberts also received an award from the National Conference of Christians and Jews for distinguished service in human relations in 1984, and the Americanism Award from the Boy Scouts of America the same year.

Jeanne Roberts, who married Dr. Roberts in 1971, was a graduate of Smith College and was active in several charitable organizations, including The Colleagues, where she served as president, and The Children's Institute International. Two children, three stepchildren, and their families survive her.

(MORE)

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ROBERTS GIFT -2

“Jeanne was a vibrant, dignified woman who showed tremendous courage and grace even in the depths of her illness,” Lee said. “It is fitting that the inaugural gift for this center be given in her honor, and I’m very proud to be part of the exciting developments that will be spurred by George’s generosity.”

Dr. Kern Wildenthal, president of UT Southwestern, said Roberts’ generous support of UT Southwestern’s clinical and research efforts will provide an outstanding foundation on which to develop a multi-disciplinary center. “This endowment will help immeasurably in UT Southwestern’s efforts to provide world-renowned excellence in the care and investigation of liver disease,” he added.

Spearheaded by Lee, UT Southwestern physicians will diagnose, treat and learn from patients with a variety of liver disorders. A faculty member of UT Southwestern since 1990, Lee is internationally recognized for his research into basic mechanisms of disease and new treatments for hepatitis B and C and acute liver failure. The widely published physician is a fellow of the American College of Physicians and the American College of Gastroenterology, and is secretary-treasurer of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases.

“Although the medical community has come incredibly far in the study of liver disease, there is still so much to be learned,” Roberts said. “I know Jeanne would be proud to contribute in a way that would make more research possible, and would be as excited as I am to be a part of such a promising project.”

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