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\$375,000 donation from Cox family establishes fund to support UT Southwestern research on brain health

DALLAS – Oct. 26, 2010 – A \$375,000 gift from Dallas businessman Berry Cox and his family will create an endowment to advance studies on brain health at UT Southwestern Medical Center, with a special focus on Alzheimer’s disease research.

The gift from the Berry R. Cox Family Foundation will support the work of a team lead by physician-scientist Dr. Joachim Herz. The contribution was made to Southwestern Medical Foundation.

“I consider Alzheimer’s disease to be the cancer of my generation; virtually everyone I know has been impacted by it in some way,” said Mr. Cox. “The more I learn about the disease and the promising research being done at UT Southwestern, the more hopeful I feel about the direction Dr. Herz and his team are headed. We view this contribution simply as the beginning of a long-term effort, which we can expand on and stay involved with for many years to come.”

Dr. Herz is noted for his groundbreaking research into how a mutation in a single protein triggers the devastation of Alzheimer’s disease, which affects 5.3 million Americans and is the country’s seventh-leading cause of death. Dr. Herz’s most recent work focuses on the study of molecules called APOE receptors, which are embedded in the membranes of nerve cells. APOE receptors make the cells more responsive to incoming signals from other nerve cells, or neurons. A mutated form of the APOE molecule, called APOE4, disrupts these signals. People with the gene for APOE4 have up to 10 times the risk of developing Alzheimer’s earlier in life than those without it.

Dr. Herz earned his undergraduate and medical degrees at the University of Heidelberg. He completed residencies in Germany and in the United Kingdom, and joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 1989.

“Alzheimer’s disease research is at a critical point, and I’m very grateful that Mr. Cox and his family have joined our team,” said Dr. Herz, director of the Center for Alzheimer’s and Neurodegenerative Diseases. “With support such as this, our efforts to find better ways to treat, cure and prevent this deadly disease will be greatly accelerated.”

Mr. Cox has been chairman of Berry R. Cox Inc., a private investment company, for more than 30 years. He serves on the board of Southwestern Medical Foundation and was an original

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investor and director of The Home Depot for more than 25 years. He has served on the boards of Texas Commerce Bancshares; Children's Medical Center Dallas; the Greenhill School; and the Associate Board of the Cox School of Business at Southern Methodist University.

He and his wife, Jeanne, were instrumental in establishing the John G. Tower Center for Political Studies at SMU, which was named after his father-in-law, the late Sen. John Tower of Texas. The Dallas couple has two sons, Justin and John.

The Berry R. Cox Family Foundation was formed in 2000 to facilitate the family's charitable activities and interests in education, medicine, low-income housing, parks and wildlife, foreign relations and other causes.

"We have great respect for the Cox family's generosity and are honored to have earned their trust," said Dr. Daniel K. Podolsky, president of UT Southwestern. "This is a meaningful gift that will help provide us with the groundwork to better understand Alzheimer's disease, which afflicts so many Americans. Their gift significantly enhances one of our most exciting clinical and research programs."

Dr. Kern Wildenthal, president of Southwestern Medical Foundation said, "Berry and Jeanne Cox are admired throughout Texas for their active involvement and leadership in many important causes. We deeply appreciate their generous decision to support this important research at UT Southwestern, which offers great hope for the future."

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