

# SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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## CABE FOUNDATION GIVES \$200,000 TO SUPPORT RESEARCH INTO LOU GEHRIG'S DISEASE AT UT SOUTHWESTERN

DALLAS – Dec. 30, 2003 – The Horace C. Cabe Foundation has given \$200,000 to UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas to foster research into amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Half of the grant will be used to complete and equip a neurology laboratory in the medical center's new research tower under construction on the North Campus. The other half of the gift will support basic scientific investigations under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey Elliott, associate professor of neurology, who is internationally recognized for his ALS research.

The gift is part of UT Southwestern's *Innovations in Medicine* campaign to raise \$500 million for clinical advances and medical research.

"Many of the trustees at the Cabe Foundation have known someone who has been affected with ALS, so this gift comes out of a recognized need for more research into a devastating disease," said Paul W. Harris, a consultant to the foundation. "The foundation always has had an interest in advancing medical care, and it views this as a wonderful opportunity to do just that."

ALS is a neurodegenerative disorder that attacks nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord, leading to muscle weakness in the arms and legs and difficulty speaking, swallowing and breathing, and eventually loss of all muscle function. There is no definitive cause and no cure for the disease, which affects about 30,000 Americans. One of its most famous victims was baseball Hall of Fame member Lou Gehrig, who retired in 1939 after being diagnosed with the illness. Although Mr. Gehrig died of ALS two years later at age 37, the disorder occurs almost entirely in patients between the ages of 50 and 70, rarely appearing before age 45.

"I am honored to receive funding from this gift and am thrilled that the Cabe Foundation has recognized and is so generously supporting the exciting work we are doing here at UT Southwestern," Dr. Elliott said. "We are continually striving to unlock the genetic culprits behind ALS and what makes motor neurons vulnerable or resistant to disease. This gift gets us

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## **CABE FOUNDATION GIFT – 2**

that much closer to finding our answers.”

The Horace C. Cabe Foundation was established in 1993, after the death of Mr. Cabe, an Arkansas businessman who, along with his siblings, founded the Gurdon Lumber Co. The company eventually prospered into one of the largest family-owned businesses in the state. Mr. Cabe, a graduate of Southern Methodist University and the Harvard School of Business, acquired timberland and instituted active and successful programs in reforestation and other land resource management practices. The foundation focuses on supporting social service, youth, medical, cultural, preservation, civic, religious and educational organizations.

Recent research at UT Southwestern also has demonstrated that an unusually high number of veterans of the 1991 Gulf War are becoming ill and dying of ALS. A study published in the journal *Neurology* – the first peer-reviewed study establishing the increased incidence of ALS among Gulf War veterans – shows that veterans of that conflict under the age of 45 have developed ALS as much as three times more frequently than those of comparable ages in the general population.

“We are on the verge of tremendous breakthroughs in ALS research, so this generous gift of the Cabe Foundation is particularly timely,” said Dr. Kern Wildenthal, president of UT Southwestern. “It will help us continue moving toward the urgent goal of curing this devastating disease.”

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