



News Release

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**SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL FOUNDATION HOSTS GOVERNOR
GREG ABBOTT FOR
“LEADING THE CONVERSATION ON HEALTH” SERIES –
A CONVERSATION ON THE IMPACT OF INCREASED RESEARCH
FUNDING
TO HIGHER ED IN TEXAS**

Abbott Spoke at Old Parkland and Discussed His Research Initiative to Bring Top Research Talent to the State of Texas

DALLAS – May 23, 2016 – Texas Governor Greg Abbott spoke about the critical need for the highest quality research as a way to continue to accelerate Texas universities and the state’s economy during a Southwestern Medical Foundation event on May 9 at Old Parkland.

Abbott spoke about “Research Talent and Its Impact in Driving the Future of Texas,” part of the *Leading the Conversation on Health* series created by the Foundation to bring together a community of thought leaders to provide a means to better understand the extraordinary strides being made in biomedical research, medical education and patient care in the Dallas area. The event took place in the Debate Chamber at Old Parkland in a conversation between Governor Abbott and Robert Rowling, Chairman of Southwestern Medical Foundation.

The Governor discussed the impact and purpose behind his recently launched Governor’s University Research Initiative (GURI), which provides matching funds to recruit nationally recognized researchers. The initiative is part of Texas’ strategic investment of \$450 million to elevate the national research standings of Texas’ public colleges and universities.

According to Abbott, GURI will bring even more Nobel Laureates and National Academy members to Texas university faculties, which will have a profound impact on the state as a whole. Governor Abbott also discussed the importance of growing and keeping the state’s top research talent.

“Governor Abbott understands that innovation is the way our economy will grow and solve the pressing problems of our time,” said Rowling. Governor Abbott is continuing to lead the effort to

attract the brightest minds and conduct important research that will advance the cause of medicine not just in Texas, but around the globe.”

Governor Abbott and Foundation representatives also spoke about the importance of using private efforts to support the goals of public research initiatives in Texas.

“Our state’s commitment to world-class research and higher education will pay dividends for our economy and for current and future generations of students and faculty across Texas,” Governor Abbott said. “I’d like to thank Southwestern Medical Foundation and its donors for supporting the extraordinary progress that’s being made today in medicine in the Lone Star State.”

UT Southwestern President Dr. Daniel K. Podolsky praised Abbott’s support and his understanding of the importance of funding top science to the future of medicine for patients in our state.

“Establishing the Governor’s University Research Initiative (GURI) should be a boon to all the institutions of Higher Education across Texas as we endeavor to recruit the very best faculty,” Podolsky stated.

“We are deeply grateful for the Governor’s support in helping us continue the momentum we are building to advance UT Southwestern as a premier academic medical center,” Dr. Podolsky said. “Support from the state is essential to the important discoveries being made at the Peter O’Donnell Jr. Brain Institute and to all the leading-edge research and progress taking place across the UT Southwestern Medical Center campus.”

The event was co-hosted by Kathleen M. Gibson, President and CEO of the Foundation, and included remarks by Foundation Trustee Harlan Crow, whose Crow Holdings restored the Old Parkland Hospital campus. In 2011, history came full circle when the Foundation moved back to the historic Old Parkland campus. The Foundation’s new offices are on the original site of Southwestern Medical College, the medical school it founded in 1943, which has evolved into today’s world-renowned UT Southwestern.

Governor Abbott was the latest in a prestigious line of Texas governors who have visited the Foundation and UT Southwestern Medical Center, including Allan Shivers, who visited in 1951, and John Connally, who visited in 1967. In 2000, the Foundation awarded former governor Bill Clements and his wife Rita with its highest award – the Charles Cameron Sprague Community Service Award, which recognizes those who have provided significant support to the fields of health care, medical education and medical research. William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital at UT Southwestern Medical Center is named in honor of the former governor.

“Governor Abbott realizes how the research that is done at our universities leads to a broad spectrum of important technology and innovation that benefits everyone,” said James Huffines, Foundation Trustee and Presiding Officer of the Governor’s University Research Initiative Advisory Board. “Thanks to Governor Abbott and the Foundation’s donors, the state of Texas is recruiting more brilliant researchers than ever before as it lifts education and medicine to new heights.”

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ABOUT SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL FOUNDATION

In 1943, Southwestern Medical Foundation established Southwestern Medical College and helped to nurture its growth from a fledgling medical school into one of the preeminent medical research and academic centers in the world. Today, UT Southwestern Medical Center enjoys an international reputation for discovering the basis for disease through research, applying the discoveries to the clinical care of patients, and educating the next generation of health care professionals.

It has been the Foundation's privilege to foster a unique culture where generosity can be imbued with meaning. The Foundation currently manages over \$700 million and 1,000 donor funds, creating a financial resource that will enable advances in health care benefiting the citizens of this community, state and nation for years to come.

For more information, please visit www.swmedical.org