



News Release

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Brittany Lebling
Southwestern Medical Foundation
214.934.0932
blebling@swmedical.org

Laurey Peat
Laurey Peat + Associates
214.871.8787
lpeat@lpapr.com

DR. NATASHA HOUSHMAND RECEIVES SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL FOUNDATION'S PRESTIGIOUS 2021 HO DIN AWARD

*Foundation's highest honor for a graduating UT Southwestern medical student
presented by previous recipient, Dr. Beth Kassanoff-Piper*

DALLAS -- May 8, 2021 -- Dr. Natasha Houshmand was presented the Ho Din Award at the UT Southwestern Medical School Commencement Ceremonies on May 8. While at UT Southwestern, Dr. Houshmand was President of the UT Southwestern Chapter of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, Vice President of the Trauma Surgery Society, and helped organize a Domestic Violence Awareness Week initiative for the American Medical Women's Association. Dr. Houshmand excelled as an undergraduate at the University of Texas at Dallas, graduating with a degree in biology. Southwestern Medical Foundation Board of Trustees were pleased to award the 2021 Ho Din to a student distinguished in her academic and service career.

In 1943, the Ho Din Award was instituted by Southwestern Medical Foundation to recognize those who exemplify the unique personal qualities embodied in all great physicians – medical wisdom and human understanding. The award represents the ideals and aspirations on which the school was built and continues to be the highest honor bestowed on a UT Southwestern medical student today.

"It has been a delight to meet this year's Ho Din Award winner," said Kathleen M. Gibson, President and CEO of Southwestern Medical Foundation. "Dr. Houshmand is an exceptional role model and is well-deserving of this honor. It will be a pleasure to watch her growth as a physician and her leadership and impact more broadly as her career advances."

Dr. Houshmand has had an excellent academic record since arriving at UT Southwestern, achieving a perfect 4.0 GPA. She also has been co-leader of UT Southwestern's Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society Gamma Chapter and organized a committee to help medical students in preparation for standardized examinations.

"I am where I am today, thanks to the preparation that UT Southwestern provided and all the support I received throughout medical school," said Dr. Houshmand. "Finishing medical school during the COVID pandemic has been an unprecedented experience that we cannot compare to anything in the past. My classmates bonded from COVID because it pushed us out of our comfort zones, and we learned valuable lessons. This became a higher calling for us to join a health care community that, more than ever, needs us ready to serve and give back."

Dr. Houshmand Seeks to be a Strong Mentor

Growing up in Dallas, Dr. Houshmand has had a life-long dedication to science, medicine, and mentorship. Raised by a mother who is a dentist, she embarked on her first mentorship with a local surgeon while still in high school. The mentorship lasted seven years and reinforced Dr. Houshmand's commitment to medicine and surgery.

A young Dr. Houshmand became enveloped in the way that her mentor, Dr. Matthew Pompeo, cared for his patients. His influence played a large role in her eventual career path.

"My interest in helping others is what drew me into the medical field," she said. "When I watched the way Dr. Pompeo cared for his patients and made them feel comfortable, I knew this was what I wanted to do. That sort of mentorship relationship from an early phase set me on track to pursue medical school and be in this position now."

Dr. Houshmand graduated in 2017 from the University of Texas at Dallas. While there, she also served as a student ambassador. She instructed her fellow students about relevant health issues as a Peer Health Educator for the Student Wellness Center. Seeking a cure for chronic tinnitus, she worked with Dr. Michael Kilgard, whose laboratory sought treatment for the condition via vagus nerve stimulation. She is the recipient of the UT Dallas Academic Excellence Scholarship as well as the Kappa Alpha Theta Alumnae Scholarship.

Welcoming Back Dr. Beth Kassanoff-Piper, Previous Ho Din Recipient and Presenter of the 2021 Award

The Ho Din Award was presented to Dr. Houshmand by a previous recipient, Dr. Beth Kassanoff-Piper, M.D. This is only the second time in the Award's history that a previous winner presented the Award to a new recipient. The first was when Dr. Kassanoff-Piper won the award in 1996, which was presented by 1966 Ho Din recipient and Nobel Laureate, Dr. Joseph L. Goldstein.

"It was an amazing experience to be awarded by Dr. Goldstein," Dr. Kassanoff-Piper said. "In medical school, we were all in awe of him and his scientific discoveries. To receive the award from someone who was a previous recipient as well as someone so accomplished was very meaningful to me and really symbolized that the Ho Din Award is a lasting and enduring tradition at UT Southwestern."

"When I received the Ho Din Award, I was just a young medical student," said Dr. Goldstein. "Now, 55 years later and a Nobel Prize under my belt, I guess I am sort of a role model for the younger generation of medical students. It is always a surprise and pleasure when UTSW medical students recognize me in a grocery store or a restaurant (in the pre-COVID-19 days) and tell me when they were at UTSW and what they are now up to in their practice of medicine."

Since winning the Ho Din and graduating from UT Southwestern, Dr. Kassanoff-Piper has treated patients in the region and established strong credentials as an innovator in the field of internal medicine. She is now the President of the Dallas County Medical Society. Dr. Kassanoff-Piper is an expert in the fields of preventive care, health and wellness. She serves as a delegate to the Texas Medical Association and is active in the North Texas Medical Society Coalition.

"Dr. Houshmand has excelled academically, as well as in research and leadership positions, and shows a deep passion for caring for others," said Dr. Kassanoff-Piper. "She is going to be a wonderful representation of the Ho Din Award and UTSW as she goes out into the world and puts into practice every day what Ho Din stands for – knowledge, understanding, and compassion. These things are all equally important in terms of caring for patients and helping communities. Dr. Houshmand will make a wonderful, positive impact on the field of medicine in surgery, as well as the field of medicine in general."

As part of her Ho Din Award, she is the recipient of a \$10,000 scholarship and a commemorative medal.

The Next Chapter

Dr. Houshmand will soon begin residency training at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. She will be pursuing her interest in trauma surgery and its intersection with public health.

"I envision myself as a trauma surgeon working in a large academic hospital, teaching and mentoring residents and medical students, serving in leadership roles to give back to the educational community, and helping inform the curriculum that is being updated and implemented," Dr. Houshmand said. "I want to be known as the physician who creates a comfortable environment where people feel safe and confident in the care they receive."

Dr. Houshmand has remarked on the significance of the award. "The Ho Din Award and the past recipients set a beautiful foundation for what is to come, setting the bar and the expectations in such a wonderful way," Dr. Houshmand said. "I think it is a great responsibility, and I am grateful for the world of opportunity that awaits me. It was an amazing experience to be awarded."

"Natasha is a born leader who inspires others with her commitment to excellence and absolute dedication to serve," said Dr. Angela Mihalic, Dean of Medical Students, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, and Professor of Pediatrics. "I have no doubt that she will remain a role model

throughout her career, will positively impact countless patients, and will make UT Southwestern very proud to have played a role in her education.”

The Ho Din Award

Serving a booming population in North Texas that was quickly becoming a significant hub for commerce in the region, Southwestern Medical College was founded by Southwestern Medical Foundation in 1943. Representing “the spirit of medical wisdom,” the prize seeks to honor members of the health care community who have demonstrated an extra commitment to serving humanity with compassion, qualities that go beyond the already strenuous requirements of being a medical professional.

Dr. Edward H. Cary was among the first to receive the Ho Din Award. Dr. Cary co-founded Southwestern Medical Foundation and his original vision for Southwestern Medical College began the trajectory toward the reality of UT Southwestern today. Dr. Cary had many leading roles, including the presidencies of Southwestern Medical Foundation, the Dallas County Medical Society (1912), the Texas State Medical Association (1917–18), the Southern Medical Association (1919–20), and the American Medical Association (1932–33).

On July 1, 1943, Dr. Cary gave a speech to the inaugural class of Southwestern Medical College: "This is an historic occasion, the beginning of something truly worthwhile for Dallas and the Southwest. It is the fruition of 40 years of effort by the best and highest-minded medical men in Dallas. Medicine belongs to all of the people. That is the goal of this Foundation."

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ABOUT SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL FOUNDATION

Southwestern Medical Foundation, founded in 1939, is a public charitable corporation and registered 501(c)(3) organization inspiring and advancing progress in medicine. The Foundation connects the vision of donors with innovative programs and serves as a sustainable funding source for leading-edge research, medical education, and patient care. In leading the health care mission forward, the Foundation is guided by four building standards: Service to Community, Vision of Excellence, Mindful Stewardship, and Best Outcomes. Each principle is a promise to donors, beneficiaries, and generations to come, assuring that Foundation is positioned to provide sustained funding for medical progress in our community and the world beyond. Southwestern Medical Foundation's significant financial health and dedication to transparency have earned the Guidestar Platinum Seal and a Charity Navigator 100/100 Encompass Rating.

ABOUT UT SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL CENTER

UT Southwestern, one of the premier academic medical centers in the nation, integrates pioneering biomedical research with exceptional clinical care and education. The institution's faculty has received six Nobel Prizes, and includes 25 members of the National Academy of Sciences, 16 members of the National Academy of Medicine, and 14 Howard Hughes Medical

Institute Investigators. The full-time faculty of more than 2,800 is responsible for groundbreaking medical advances and is committed to translating science-driven research quickly to new clinical treatments. UT Southwestern physicians provide care in about 80 specialties to more than 117,000 hospitalized patients, more than 360,000 emergency room cases, and oversee nearly 3 million outpatient visits a year.