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TRADITION
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"Dallasites have come to take UT Southwestern for granted – they enjoy the cachet and the global recognition, but most have no idea how it got here."

Kathleen Gibson

INSPIRING PEOPLE

KATHLEEN GIBSON

President and CEO

Southwestern Medical Foundation



When Kathleen Gibson began as President and CEO of the Southwestern Medical Foundation in 2012, she had already served as President within Citibank and Bank of America. The transition to Southwestern was more logical than it would appear. "I am once again managing relationships, money, risk, and people, which was familiar," said Kathleen. "Only now, with this beautiful purpose behind it."

This "beautiful purpose" – that of Southwestern Medical Foundation – has developed over a period of more than 75 years. It began with nothing but the vision of one man – Edward H. Cary – and resulted in becoming one of the top medical centers in the world. Dallasites have come to take UT Southwestern for granted – they enjoy the cachet and the global recognition, but, says Kathleen, most have no idea how it got here.

"In the late 1800s, Dallas was, in fact, a 'medical wilderness,' according to Edward Cary," said Kathleen. Cary first arrived in Dallas in 1890 and fell in love with the city. He left to become a doctor of ophthalmology, traveled throughout the country as head of the AMA, and returned to Dallas with a vision to create out of this medical wilderness the best doctors, best students, best faculty, and best teaching facility.

"Cary eventually established Southwestern Medical Foundation in 1939," said Kathleen, "setting out to build a health care community that was heart and brain connected – quality care combined with compassion."

In 1943 – in the middle of World War II – Cary said, "Let's build a school." So Southwestern Medical College was established (later to become UT Southwestern), and for 15 years it operated within a village of plywood buildings situated by Parkland Hospital.

"A business story is woven throughout all of this history," said Kathleen, "including a 'who's who' of the leading businessmen in the city coming together to support Cary's vision." The board in 1943 is revealing: three top banking and two top retail executives, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, the President of Texas A&M, Karl Hoblitzelle (a co-founder of the school), and Cary. Mayors were supportive throughout the years, and later Eugene McDermott and Cecil Green would enter the picture.

"When Cary went to the Chamber and the City Council," said Kathleen, "he asked for \$100K for the next ten years for the annual operating budget to run the school. They said 'yes.'"

Civic leaders and businessmen have continued to "rally round" the foundation up to today, including William Solomon and Robert Rowling, the former and current Chairman of the Board of the Foundation.

With Cary running the school, research began and national recognition started happening. In 1985, the first two of six Nobel Prize winners emerged from UT Southwestern.

"The business community," said Kathleen, "is the reason it happened. I am grateful to play a small part in furthering a Foundation with so much impact on the welfare of our community."