

Philanthropy & Nonprofits

Southwestern Medical Foundation leaders reflect on 75 years in Dallas



Kathleen Gibson serves as president and CEO of Southwestern Medical Foundation, as well as a board member.

JAKE DEAN



By Anna Butler – Associate Editor, Dallas Business Journal

2 hours ago

In a blend of poetry and propriety, [Southwestern Medical Foundation's](#) office in Parkland Hall at Old Parkland rests above the original site of [Southwestern Medical School](#), which was founded in the early 1940s with the vision of Dr. Edward H. Cary and Karl Hoblitzelle.

The history-ensconced setting is apt for an organization that is acutely aware of its 75-year legacy in North Texas. It is a legacy that is entrenched in the belief that the Foundation could not only make the southwest region a medical powerhouse, but could benefit the life of every Dallas citizen with the opportunities that the medical school would bring.

Members of the Foundation's Board of Trustees continue to strive not only to support one of the most prominent medical schools in the country, but to keep the future of Dallas in-mind in its strategy and development.

"I can tell you that it is a beautiful synergy of people who care," said [Kathleen M. Gibson](#), who serves as president and CEO of Southwestern Medical Foundation, as well as a board member. "They give their time; they advocate; they're engaged; they're there for advice; and they raise funds."

Looking to the future, the organization's enduring potential excites Gibson.

"I think the tremendous opportunity we have is to engage broadly with many, many more people as our community grows," she said. "Our community is growing north and south and east and west, and it's broader than Dallas in terms of the impact that our mission could have."

Jere W. Thompson, Jr., co-founder and CEO of Ambit Energy, joined Southwestern Medical Foundation's Audit Committee in 1999 and now serves as the committee's chair. In his near 20 years as a trustee, he's watched the Foundation's records, both ledgers and donor documents, shift from pencil-and-paper to a sophisticated internal system.

Thompson points to Investment Committee Chair Robert H. Dedman, Jr. as one of the forces behind the Foundation's financial outcomes, analyzing risk and reward in the context of the overall market - the Foundation manages more than \$850 million across 1,000 funds.

"I've seen them pivot and make major adjustments when they felt we were over-diversified or when they felt our returns didn't match up with comparable market returns," explained Thompson. "Their decisiveness and their judgement have really benefited the Foundation well and have helped it grow its overall asset base."

Looking back at the Foundation's origin - back to when Dr. Cary and Hoblitzelle first began to develop their vision and Dallas was still a 'small frontier town' in 1939 - Thompson notes the founders' incorporation of the local business community.

"That's what generations of business and civic leaders have sought to do ever since. When you consider what accomplishments have been made at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical campus, the number of doctors now supporting North Texas, its clinical services, its medical research, it's absolutely fantastic," said Thompson. "It's incredible to see what's come from those early days."

For Southwestern Medical Foundation's Board of Trustees, as the organization wraps up a milestone year, the momentum continues with everyone asking "what's next, what more can be done," according to Thompson.

"The best is yet to come," he said.

"We have certainly celebrated our 75-year history, which is the history of health care as we know it in Dallas," said Gibson. "We hope the next 75 years will have as great an impact on this community and this state and this country as it has for its first 75."

Alongside Gibson and Thompson, the organization is governed by the Board of Trustees' Executive Committee: Robert B. Rowling, chair; William T. Solomon, immediate past chair; Jan Hart Black, Public Affairs Committee chair; Mary McDermott Cook; David R. Corrigan; Robert H. Dedman, Jr., Investment Committee chair; David C. Haley; James R. Huffines; Rex V. Jobe, Personnel and Retirement Committee chair; Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.; and Catherine M. Rose. Additionally, Nita P. Clark (Awards Committee), Karen L. Shuford (Nominating Committee) and Linda Harbin Roebuck (Scholarship Committee) serve as Executive Committee chairs.

Southwestern Medical Foundation's Executive Committee was selected as a non-profit board honoree for the 2017 Outstanding Directors Awards with a special commendation for its community achievement.