

TEXAS★LEADER

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF THE UNIVERSITY

WINTER 2016

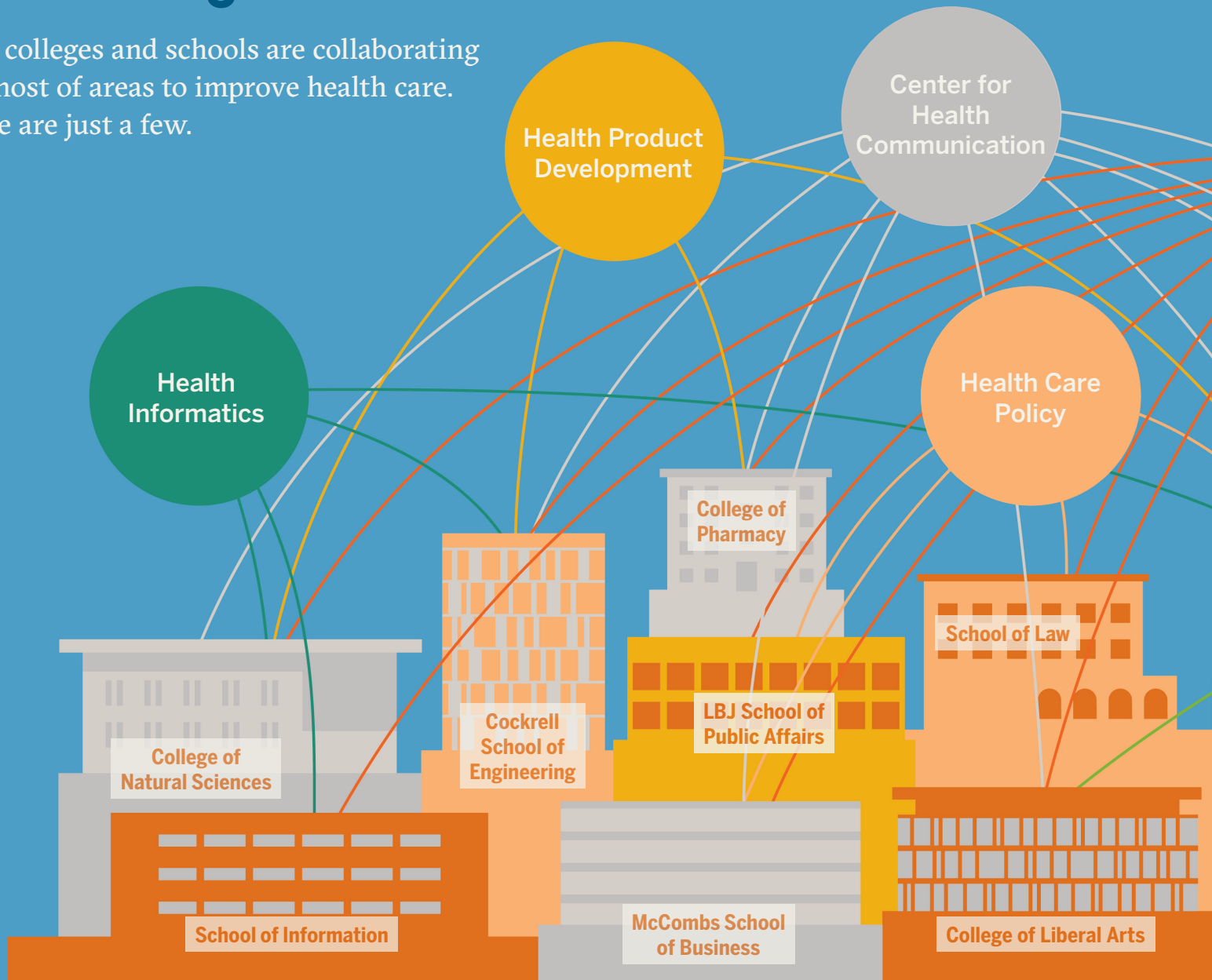


HEALTHY U.

UT Austin grows the new health care ecosystem

Connecting the Docs

UT's colleges and schools are collaborating in a host of areas to improve health care. These are just a few.



From the President

The University of Texas at Austin strives to change the world and tackle the toughest problems. The transformation of health care through the Dell Medical School, one of my top priorities for the university, offers particularly fertile ground for an interdisciplinary approach at Texas' flagship university.

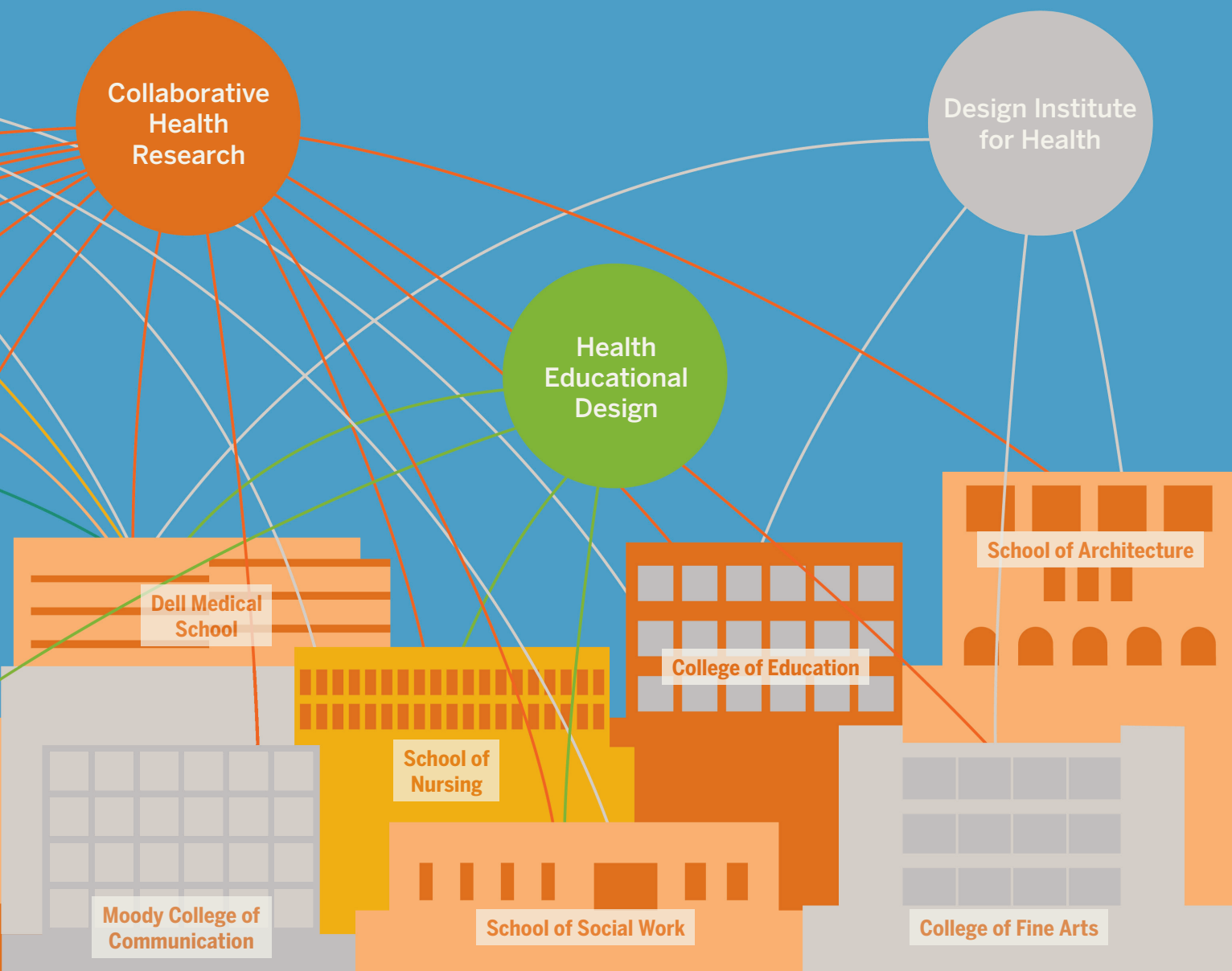
The first medical school launched by a major American public research university in nearly 50 years, Dell Med is not just UT Austin's 18th college. It is an enormous opportunity for the entire campus to rethink fundamental assumptions about health care.

Students and faculty at Dell Med have already begun collaborating across the campus with colleagues in the

sciences, engineering, arts, humanities, and professional programs to create an ecosystem dedicated to finding solutions to our health care challenges. They are building on the cutting-edge research already underway in fields like biomedical engineering, supercomputing, infectious diseases, biological sciences, management, and many others; creating synergies with our top professional programs in nursing, pharmacy, business, and social work; and finding new ways to use design principles to deliver health care more effectively.

When we thought of what UT Austin was already doing in health care, a medical school was the only thing we did not have. And now we do.

ILLUSTRATION: MELINDA BECK



In these pages, you will hear from our first medical students and read how their education prepares them to be physician leaders, and about the connections with other students who will eventually work with doctors in health care teams.

You can read five stories of incredible donors who are enabling our colleges and schools to improve health: Mitchel and Shannon Wong, who are helping launch an eye institute at Dell Med; Mike and Kay Lester, who have endowed a Pharmacy program in entrepreneurship; Peggy and Robert Wetegrove, who have established multiple chairs in Natural Sciences to fight infectious disease; Dianne Kline, who is investing in the School of Nursing; and Carl Knowlan,

who is enabling Engineering to push the boundaries of biomedical imaging.

I am grateful to all of these donors for being true Texas Leaders, and I am grateful to yet another critical part of the UT Austin ecosystem — you.

Gregory L. Fenves, President



FIRST CLASS

The Dell Medical School selected 50 students from more than 4,000 applicants to form its inaugural class. The stories of these eight tell you more than anything else could about the school and its mission.

by Mary Kincy Cope, Sibyl Kaufman, and Sara Robberson Lentz

Amber Dunbar

Hometown: Sugar Land, Texas

Education: Yale

Degree: Ph.D., Psychology

Amber Dunbar wants doctors to think about the mind, not just the body. “Mental health is one of the more forgotten aspects of physical health,” explains Dunbar, who has made it her personal mission to see emotional and psychological science incorporated into standard medical care.

“I enjoy research, but one of the things you can’t get on the lab bench is the ability to see real change in people’s lives,” says Dunbar.

She’s determined to help those in need receive the care they deserve. As director of social services at HAVEN Free Clinic in Connecticut, she helped

undocumented immigrants access care. She is also the co-founder of the (I’m) Possible Project, where she educates youth about the importance of seeking psychological support without fear or shame. Numerous other volunteer and nonprofit ventures crowd Dunbar’s résumé, but she is ready to add a new entry: medical student.

Woody Green

Hometown: Austin, Texas

Education: UT Austin

Degree: B.A., Art

As an undergraduate, Woody Green recorded soundscapes from his Texas Crew rowing practice. His efforts translated the coordinated clicks of eight oars powering through the

waters of Lady Bird Lake into a kind of art — his major.

A wife, a daughter, and nearly a decade as a paramedic for Austin-Travis County EMS later, Green is again leveraging one set of experiences to shape another. This time, he’s bringing his background in emergency response to the Dell Medical School’s inaugural class.

As a paramedic, Green witnessed firsthand how underserved families are forced to use emergency services rather than primary care physicians. The experience drives his desire to focus on “those with the least” as a physician, and to pursue person-centered care and community-driven initiatives.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF DELL MEDICAL SCHOOL

Eugene Kim

Hometown: Rockwall, Texas

Education: SMU

Degree: B.S., Biochemistry

It was details that first attracted Eugene Kim to the science of the body — the molecular-level reactions that influence everything from mood to liver function. But as he completed his coursework for a biochemistry degree, he realized he was interested in broader concepts. “My trajectory shifted, and I realized that I had become more of a big-picture person.”

Kim recognized the importance of looking at health as an ecosystem while studying the mechanisms of antibiotics. “I realized the numbers of multi-drug-resistant bacteria were growing due to over-prescription of antibiotics and the lack of recent innovation in the field of antibiotics,” he says. “I saw the disconnect between pharmaceutical production and need, becoming aware of both the process and politics of drugs.”

Juan Valente Resendez

Hometown: Laredo, Texas

Education: UT Austin

Degree: B.S., Public Health

Juan Valente Resendez's mother was diagnosed with lupus at his birth; it's what made waiting rooms “a huge part” of his childhood. “Going to the doctor's office was a really normal thing for me,” he says. Now, it's what might make him a better physician in his own right.

“I was able to get a pretty unique perspective,” says Resendez, a first-generation college student who sometimes juggled two or three jobs to make ends meet. “It made me so much more empathetic and prepared me to be an advocate for people like my mom, who speak limited English or who are low-income or are raising kids while facing health issues.”

Jessica Reynoso

Hometown: Allen, Texas

Education: UT Austin

Degree: B.S., Nutritional Science

“I think virtually anything can be accomplished,” says Jessica Reynoso. “One just needs the right outlook and attitude.” Reynoso is setting her sights on medicine — and on addressing the health disparities she witnessed while working as a registered dietitian.

“My time at Meals on Wheels increased my awareness of the social determinants of health some of the most vulnerable in our community face and fueled my passion to serve this group and help them overcome these barriers,” she says. “I came to the conclusion that medicine would allow me to combine my background in nutrition with my desire to intervene earlier on, when people are typically healthier and more capable of making meaningful changes.”

Whitney Williams

Hometown: Horseheads, New York

Education: Davidson College

Degree: B.S., Biology

Whitney Williams wrote the personal statement required for her medical school applications twice — once before her fellowship at a nonprofit focused on population health and once after it.

“Beginning to understand America's health care infrastructure and learning more about why it does not serve some people very well made me rethink what I wanted for a career in medicine,” she says. “I discovered that I wanted to be more than a cookie-cutter physician. During medical school and throughout my career, I want to think about ways we can ensure that all people can attain and maintain good health.”

Whitney is motivated by family members facing health challenges, and she's inspired by the possibility of becoming “a leader and agent for change” in medicine.

Aydin Zahedivash

Hometown: Austin, Texas

Education: UT Austin

Degree: B.S., Biomedical Engineering

The son of Iranian immigrants, Aydin Zahedivash learned early on to navigate two different cultures.

As he grew up, Zahedivash discovered a talent for technology. He also began to identify role models like F1 driver Ayrton Senna, who used his racing fame to advance social justice. Those examples led Zahedivash to bioengineering to improve and save lives. He is already working with a team of researchers to help automate diagnostic decisions, providing physicians with tools for better management of cardiovascular disease.

Brooke Wagen

Hometown: Austin, Texas

Education: Wofford College

Degree: B.S., Biology and Spanish

“It's easy to miss once you've been here a while, but not every city feels this alive,” says Brooke Wagen, who applied to just one medical school — Dell Med, in her adopted hometown of Austin. The timing was perfect.

“I've known I wanted to be a physician for about two decades, but I wanted to be a mom first. So, here I am with my oldest going off to college and my youngest happily settled into first grade,” she says.

A regular around her East Austin neighborhood, she advocates and translates for her Spanish-speaking neighbors. She also volunteers for Meals on Wheels and at Kealing Middle School, where one of her sons is a student.

“I hope to serve the community in which I live, particularly the geriatric population and the homebound in public housing,” she says. ●



Students in social work, medicine, nursing, and pharmacy work together in the Foundations Year One Health Interprofessional Course.

the stereotypes and power imbalances between disciplines. “If we’re rethinking everything, including how we’re financing health care, we have great opportunities to change those power imbalances. The old-school model has had the doctor in charge, giving orders, and others responding,” says Jones. While medical care has been fee-for-service, social work has been a bundled service, in which providers are reimbursed based on expected costs for clinically defined episodes. Jones says if we built a system that rewarded doctors for outcomes rather than for the time patients spend getting care — “staying out of the hospital — the whole apparatus would look very different.”

Who can help with that? “Social work can, because we have the skills to assess the person in their environment, their needs and barriers, their support system. We truly put the patient and family at the center of care.”

Since the goal is to increase teamwork in practice, students are put into teams the first day of class. Their assignments are in those teams, and they are graded in those teams.

Philanthropy could make a big difference, including scholarships for social workers in the health field or endowments for specialized training programs. “What we can do here is different from any other school in the country because we’re building a medical school from the ground up. Nowhere else does social work have this much influence and opportunity for true collaboration,” Jones says. “With even more support, UT could take it to the next level, and be the leader in social work and interprofessional education.” ●

The Rise of the Team

UT’s School of Social Work is showing future professionals in health fields how to work together

In 1241, the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II issued an edict separating the medical and pharmaceutical professions. It was not the beginning of medical specialization (which had been practiced at least as early as the Romans), but it was a harbinger of things to come. Health care, like all fields, would undergo dramatic specialization over the coming centuries.

While no one desires a return to the Middle Ages — when your barber and surgeon were the same person — wouldn’t health care be better if pharmacists, doctors, nurses, social workers, and educators really understood each other’s roles and worked more like a team?

Five years ago, Barbara Jones, a professor in UT’s School of Social Work, and John Luk, then a professor at UT Medical Branch in Galveston, teamed up to create the graduate course “Transformative Teams in Health Care: Dialogues in Interprofessional Practice.” They gathered students from social work, medicine, pharmacy, nursing, and

educational psychology to teach them how to collaborate.

“Everyone in health care is trained in silos,” explains Jones, inaugural assistant dean for health affairs at the School of Social Work. As long as those silos stand, patients will never be at the center of their own care. “If we can teach students, ‘This is what a pharmacist does,’ and ‘This is what a social worker does,’ then when they’re out in practice hopefully they can work together better,” says Jones.

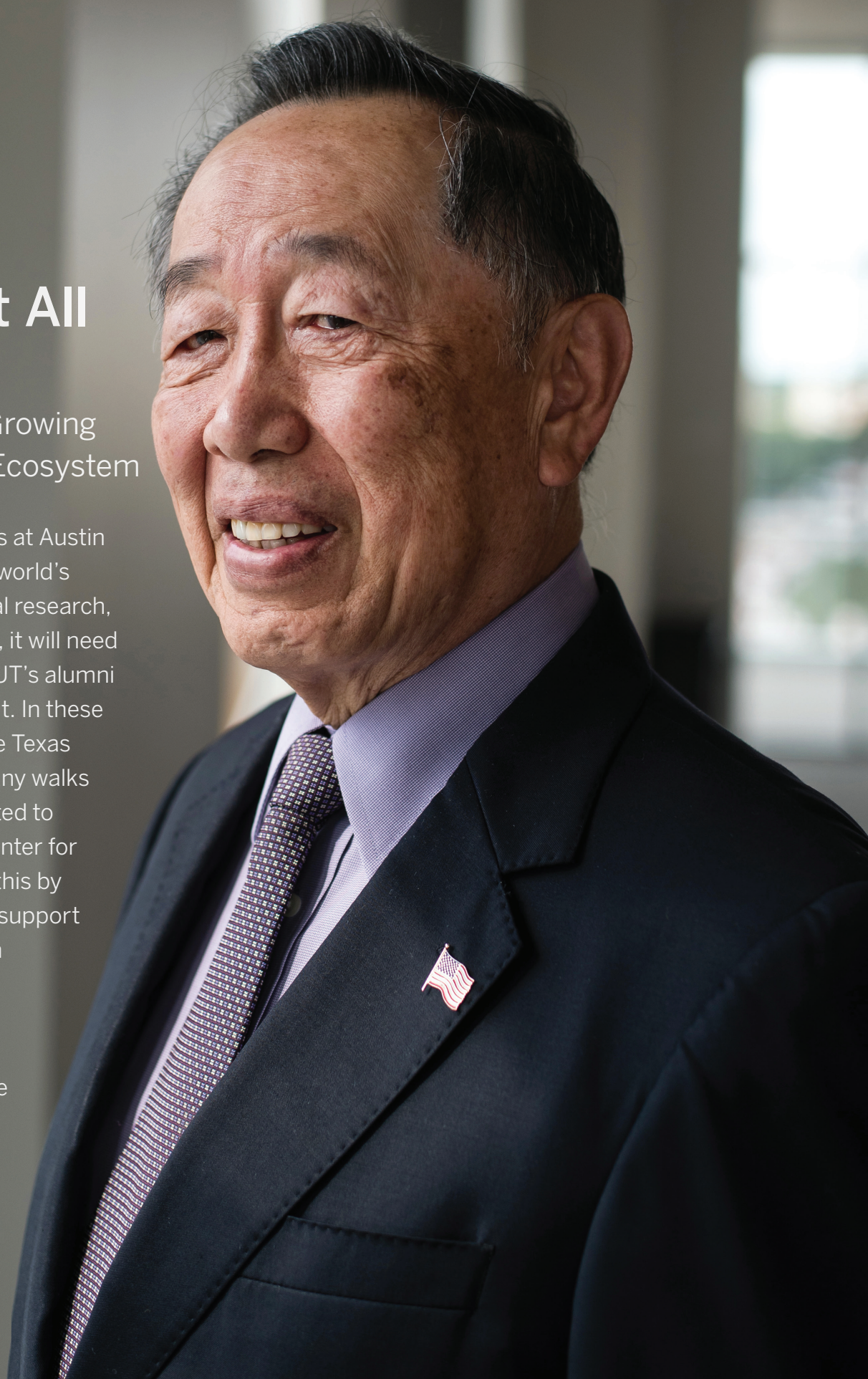
When the Dell Medical School was announced, Jones and Luk, now Dell Med’s assistant dean for interprofessional integration, were tapped along with colleagues from nursing and pharmacy to develop the medical school’s four-year interprofessional curriculum. Now called the “Foundations Year One Health Interprofessional Course,” the class has grown from 30 to 255 students drawn from social work and nursing as well as the two schools for which it is mandatory — medicine and pharmacy. About 40 faculty members in the four areas teach it.

The class addresses head-on both

Bringing It All Together

How Donors Are Growing UT's Health Care Ecosystem

If The University of Texas at Austin is to become one of the world's great centers for medical research, teaching, and treatment, it will need support. And thanks to UT's alumni and friends, it is getting it. In these pages, you will meet true Texas leaders, people from many walks of life who have committed to making Texas a world center for health. They have done this by making planned gifts to support health-related education and research across the Forty Acres—in nursing, engineering, pharmacy, natural sciences, and the medical school. With their passion and their gifts, they are helping UT Austin reimagine health care in America.





The Visionaries

Austin's Wong family helps establish eye institute at Dell Med to train next generation of ophthalmologists

On a summer day in 1939, the first Chinese-American was born in Austin, Texas, Mitchel Wong. Little did anyone suspect that the Wongs, who had been grocers for generations, would raise a son who would build one of Austin's most successful medical practices and, with his own family, make one of the largest gifts in the history of the university in whose shadow their grocery store sat.

Last month, UT announced that Mitchel and his family had pledged more than \$20 million to help create the Mitchel and Shannon Wong Eye Institute at UT's Dell Medical School. "All the right things came together in our lives so that we could contribute.

It's really a family gift," says Mitchel.

Even before this historic gift, the Wongs had made a deep impact on Central Texas health care. In 1969, Mitchel founded Austin Eye, now a five-doctor, 35-employee ophthalmology practice with two locations.

The Wongs have four sons, all in Austin, two of whom followed their father into ophthalmology. Shannon co-owns Austin Eye with Mitchel, and Shawn practices at Eyes of Texas Laser Center. Michael is attorney principle of the AIM Real Estate Group, and Patrick, M.Ar. '92, owns an architectural photography studio. Four daughters-in-law and nine grandchildren round out the family.

Mitchel is the first to point out that ophthalmology is not typically among

the early departments of medical schools, so this stands as further evidence that Dell Med does not intend to be traditional. And vision is increasingly important in an aging population. The CDC predicts the number of blind and visually impaired people in America will double by 2030.

"The Wongs' story is Austin's story. We're honored that they'll build part of their legacy on Dell Med's campus," says Dean Clay Johnston. "The Eye Institute will contribute much to our school and the way we train physicians. But it's also a fabulous metaphor for the health care transformation we're trying to help accelerate in Austin — it's helping us all to see more clearly what the world looks like and how we can help make it better."

PHOTOS: THOMAS MEREDITH

Dr. Shannon Wong says, “This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to leave a legacy for future generations. It helps everybody. It helps the community. It helps our immediate family because it sets an example. God knows what my kids are going to do with their lives, but it will impact them, and it helps us pay it forward. We can help shape the next generation of doctors, of ophthalmologists,” says Shannon, and what’s more, he says, “I think that will be a lot of fun. You can’t take it with you. In the long run, this is a great way to go out with a bang.”

This family’s multigenerational journey from China to Austin shows the blend of work ethic and risk-taking that has made them successful. Mitchel’s grandparents left famine-plagued southern China to help build the transcontinental railroad in Mexico. When General Pershing led the U.S. Army into Mexico in pursuit of Pancho Villa, Mitchel’s grandfather found work as a baker for the American soldiers and in 1917 followed them all the way up to San Antonio, where he resettled. Perhaps revealing a congenital restlessness

that eventually passed to Mitchel, his father, Fred, became the only child to leave San Antonio, settling in Austin.

Mitchel started working at the family grocery at age 6. “All of my basic lessons are from things that happened in that store. I was helping my dad around the store, and I asked him to tell me what to do, and he sternly said, ‘Don’t ask me what to do! Look for something that needs doing and do it!’ That is a small lesson, but you don’t have to tell me what to do. I’ll look for something. It gave me initiative to think for myself.”

And he certainly did. Given the choice to join his father in the grocery business or “try school,” Mitchel, who had spent his high school summers working 70 hours a week, chuckles, “I thought for about five seconds and said, ‘I think I’ll try school.’”

He enrolled at UT in zoology and earned his B.A. in three years, graduating in 1960, then heading to Houston’s Baylor College of Medicine to become a physician. His choice of ophthalmology came after a professor met him in the hallway and asked if he wanted to assist him with an eye operation. “I kind of liked what I saw,” he remembers. “It’s very precise, very small, very clean, and you can usually

get results quickly.” Vision’s huge impact on quality of life also appealed to him.

The University of Texas at Austin enabled him to start his career, but it was also during his Longhorn days that he made his most important discovery, his future wife. Rose was born in China and left her family at age 16, crossing the Pacific on a freighter with a Catholic scholarship to study nursing. She was studying in Belton and visiting Austin when they met.

For Shannon, seeing his father happy in his career made following in his footsteps a natural choice. With a bachelor’s degree from Rice, Shannon also graduated from Baylor College of Medicine.

“The University of Texas is a Tier 1 university,” Mitchel says. “Dell Medical School is going to be one of the best medical schools in the nation because of its location in Austin and its association with The University of Texas.”

Shannon adds, “The result of this gift will be viral. We’ll be able to touch the lives of doctors in training and ophthalmologists who will go on to touch the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. This is one small way of expanding our imprint on the world.” ●



PHARM FUTURES



Mike Lester parlayed a pharmacy degree into a string of multimillion-dollar companies. Now he's helping UT Pharmacy students see there's more than one prescription for success

The sun was setting that summer evening in 1975 as the Missouri-Pacific train slowly crossed Town Lake heading back to San Antonio from its daily run to Taylor. Aboard, an 18-year-old brakeman, who had graduated high school early and spent a year on the rails considering his next move, stared down at the water. Mike Lester saw the flotilla of young people that was Austin's Aqua Fest, a river parade in full swing. And he thought, "I've got to get out of this engine ... and go to school."

As soon as the train arrived in San Antonio, Lester quit and quickly enrolled at UT to study pharmacy. He had grown up in Pleasanton, where his father worked in the oil fields and his mother worked for the regional power company. "My dad had always pointed to the local pharmacist and told me I should consider it." He remembers his words: "They do well, and they get to work for themselves. You ought to think about that."

If he had built a career as a pharmacist, he indeed would have done well for himself, but it was following the entrepreneurial advice he received that propelled him into a career that would allow him eventually to give more than \$10 million to his alma mater.

Though he wouldn't change his small-town upbringing, Lester concedes it was "not the best education in the world. I remember at UT the calculus professor holding up the book on the first day. I could barely spell *calculus*, and the students next to me from Alamo Heights were saying, 'Hey, that's the book we had in high school!'" But he proved a quick study, and with the support of Associate Dean Bill Sheffield and Professor Solomon Stavchansky, who is still on the faculty, he succeeded.

After graduation in 1979, Lester landed a job as a staff pharmacist

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MIKE LESTER

at Methodist Hospital in Dallas. He learned the business side of pharmacy, but says, “I very quickly realized there was no place to practice what I was taught at that time. There was no clinical role unless you went to an academic center setting. So I decided to seek a road less traveled and combine my business interest with my pharmacy education.”

Just three years after graduation, Lester, 26, and fellow pharmacist and friend Terry McCord launched an in-patient hospital pharmacy management company, Preferred Hospital Pharmacies. The youthful partners ended up with facilities in 10 hospitals across three states. When they sold it in 1988, the pattern was set that would escalate Lester into the business stratosphere.

His second business was an infusion therapy company that trained HIV/AIDS patients to self-administer intravenous medicine at home or in outpatient facilities. The sale of that company in 1996 was very successful, but his passion to build companies that both helped people and were profitable drove him forward.

Lester’s wife, Kay, also started as a practicing pharmacist, but after a couple of years she entered the medical device sales field. She worked for two start-up companies for 20 years before following her passion to go back to school for a master’s degree in theology and biblical studies.

By the late ’90s, the Lesters were restless for change and moved to the Seattle area, where he started networking and raising money for his next project. By 1998 he had raised \$10 million to start Radiant Research, which conducted human clinical trials for pharmaceutical companies. He sold it in 2006 with another successful outcome.

He then created the outpatient wound care company Accelecare Wound Centers and grew it to 150

clinics in 37 states. Lester sold the company in 2015. He has since raised \$250 million in private equity to start a behavioral health company focused on evidence-based treatment of patients suffering from addiction, substance abuse, and eating disorders in a variety of settings including residential treatment centers, outpatient clinics, and aftercare settings.

How does he choose his next endeavor? For this one, he and his team sat down with a white board and looked at three areas: pharmacy services (whose margins he concluded were too low), physical therapy (in which he says there were not enough new developments), and behavioral health. The new company, LifeStance Health, will begin with adolescent mental health. The other two divisions of the company will be adolescent alcohol and drug treatment and eating disorders.

Lester sees a lack of medically driven, evidence-based treatment in this field, which tends to focus on the addiction instead of the cause. “If we focus on the underlying cause of the addiction, such as depression, anxiety, bi-polar, etc., the patient will have a much better chance of recovery, particularly in adolescents.”

So why has the health care mogul chosen to support UT Pharmacy with a \$10 million gift in his will? “While I haven’t practiced pharmacy, except for the first few years out of school, it was my degree in pharmacy that was the cornerstone that allowed me to start all these companies. My pharmacy education gave me clinical credibility with health care and investment professionals. This degree has afforded me to make great connections and given me amazing opportunities to venture into the journey of business and pharmacy.”

With the help of Dean Lynn Crismon, Lester is setting up a program

for students to learn from his success — to create pharmaceutical entrepreneurs. UT already has the No. 3 pharmacy program in the nation, and with Lester’s help, it could well go even higher. “The Wharton, Harvard, and Stanford MBA schools really focus their students on the entrepreneurial side of the world,” Lester says, and he wants UT Austin to be in that company.

“I’d love to be a part of it,” he says of the program. In fact, he’s already helping five UT students brainstorm their business ideas. “A lot of times you get so passionate about something, you need somebody to say, ‘That might not be the best idea in the world, but it could sure be a means to an end, a stepping stone in your entrepreneurial career to get to the next level.’”

Most of all, Mike Lester wants students to know that a degree in pharmacy can lead in many directions. “Though working in a retail pharmacy is a great job and could be perfect for many people, there are many other opportunities out there for people with degrees in pharmacy. I don’t want students to feel pigeonholed as retail or hospital pharmacists. The opportunities are vast with this education.”

A pharmacy entrepreneurial scholars program has been created for UT students showing the skill and desire to mix business with pharmacy. This program did not start with just Lester’s desire to succeed in business and pharmacy but began with his father, Kenneth Kelton Lester, who encouraged Mike all those years ago in a small South Texas town to consider pharmacy and work for himself. Accordingly, this first scholars program of its kind for pharmacy is named the K.K. Lester Entrepreneurial Scholars Program, in honor of Lester’s father. ●



‘I’m Giving It All’

Carl Knowlan’s deeply personal gift to the Cockrell School of Engineering

Four years ago, Carl Knowlan was in a lunch line when his phone rang. On the other end, a student caller asked if he might donate to UT’s annual fund. “I’ll give you a donation,” he said, “but what I’m really interested in is how I fund a scholarship at The University of Texas.” Startled, the student took his number and promised to get back to him.

Knowlan, who grew up in the Houston area, had graduated with a government degree from UT in 1985. He built a career as an IT consultant to laboratories and formed a staffing company. But the bulk of his adult life was shaped by caring for his loving parents, both of whom suffered lengthy declines. His father, an industrial engineer, was stricken with Parkinson’s, dementia, and heart disease. His mother battled cancer, strokes, and emphysema. In total, Knowlan willingly dedicated 25 years to being a skilled caregiver for his parents.

Having invested so much in loved ones who now were gone, he went through a crisis of purpose. What would he do with the rest of his life?

He looked inward, prayed, and eight months later his phone rang.

When the student caller reconnected Knowlan to UT, wheels were set in motion that would lead him to a new focus and kindle an intense partnership neither he nor the university could have predicted. Development officer Catherine Ott Griffith reached out and brainstormed with him about how he could make a difference. Driven by a desire to help cure diseases like the ones he had seen up close, Knowlan homed in on biomedical engineering and established the Carl Hagen Knowlan Endowed Excellence Fund in the Department of Biomedical Engineering. He has bequeathed \$400,000 to the department but also wants to give during his lifetime.

“I’m not a multimillionaire,” he says. “I’m a normal, middle-class person, but I’m passionate about my direction in life from here on, and it’s to give back.” Knowlan recites a personal mission statement: “... to bring awareness to education and to advance science to alleviate human suffering, increase human performance, and increase human life span.”

“I’m giving it all,” he says with a smile. “All of my estate goes to The University of Texas — everything!”

The current steward of Knowlan’s generosity is Andy Dunn, the director of the Center for Emerging Imaging Technologies in Biomedical Engineering. Dunn characterizes the gift as “very significant” for the Cockrell School’s youngest department, 14 years old and with commensurately young alumni generally not able yet to make sizeable gifts.

Knowlan’s bequest could allow dozens of students to experience lab research and support several graduate students throughout their academic careers. Dunn’s research focuses on combining medical imaging with predictive models. Getting clearer pictures of tumors throughout a course of treatment, then combining those with predictive models, could help customize therapy.

The emergence of the Dell Medical School at UT was simply one more confirmation to Knowlan that he was on the right path. “I didn’t even know a medical school was planned when I did this,” he says, “but it’s perfect. From research to service delivery, it’s the entire cycle. It’s comprehensive, and it’s going to be a model.”

Knowlan doesn’t consider himself wealthy, but says someone like him can still have a significant impact provided he targets his gift. He encourages potential donors to search their own lives for what interests them. “Do some self study. Determine what you’re passionate about. Focus in that area,” he says. “Ask to talk to a few folks. Most people have time to talk to you even if they’re world-famous professors. You’ll be amazed by what happens and how you’ll start to see creative ways to contribute.

“I can’t help myself now. I am so driven,” he says. “It’s amazing, and I love it.” ●

'It Was Always the Nurses'

Dianne Kline, making her mark on the School of Nursing

Most people who have spent their careers as staff members at a public university — if they have planned well — might retire and then spend their time and their savings on cruises, RVs, creature comforts, and entertainment.

Dianne Kline is not most people. After a full career working in a variety of offices across UT, she did retire, then returned to work part-time. For the past five years she has received visitors at the front desk of UT's Development Office. And instead of rewarding herself with luxuries, she has made a substantial planned gift to UT's School of Nursing. Spotlight-shy, Kline prefers the specifics of her gift remain anonymous, but says, "I'd walk across hot coals to get attention for the School of Nursing."

Kline's passion for nursing has its roots in a Brownfield, Texas, hospital room in 1964. There, as a 9-year-old, she lay for three weeks in an oxygen tent battling pneumonia. The ones who kept her going were the nurses. "They were the ones who would come talk to me in the middle of the night. They were the ones who held my hand," she remembers. Her affinity for nurses only deepened throughout a lifetime overcoming medical challenges including brain surgery. "My surgeons have been top-notch, but it's always been the nurses at night who are there talking to me, getting me through it."

The reasons she chose UT as the main object of her philanthropy are many and began with her admission as a student. "I was stunned that the university let me in!" she laughs. She

worked on campus throughout her years as a government student, and on graduating in 1985, got her first job working with Herb Woodson, a director of three UT research centers who became dean of engineering during Kline's decade with him. "He gave me every imaginable opportunity as a staff member."

"I could go on a cruise, but why? I take two fly-fishing trips a year. I have a nice three-year-old car. I live in a nice place. I have what I need. I got an enormous amount from this place. And I got an enormous amount in my lifetime from nurses. I want those nursing students to know it."

Kline asked a development colleague to bring her programs she might want to support. She started giving several times a year to a School of Nursing program at the Children's Wellness Center, the only clinic for the 14,000 children in Del Valle ISD on Austin's southeast side.

Her planned gift will create a fund for the dean to use to give students experiential training. Her inspiration came during a visit to the school's Hospital Simulation Day, when some students play the role of patients and

others their nurses. When she saw this role playing and saw the value of high-tech equipment like mannequins that breathe and bleed, she thought, "My money needs to go to something like this!"

The creation of the Dell Medical School offers the opportunity for medical students to join nursing students in the simulation. "I hope collaboration can grow because of gifts like this," she says. "I've had enough surgeries to know that the medical students need these simulations too."

Andria Brannon, a director on UT's gift and estate planning team, concurs. "The ability to have the funds to run these interdisciplinary programs is very important. Health care is moving away from the individual provider to a team that's caring for a person."

"I am a dinosaur," says Kline. "I'm one of those people who learned from my dad to be grateful to the people you learned from, and to give back to them." With tears in her eyes and force behind every word, she says, "I am grateful to this university. I received a lot from this university, and I am going to give back to it." ●





Infectious Enthusiasm

Bob and Peggy Wetegrove strike a blow against infectious diseases

Bob and Peggy Wetegrove spent their careers focused on two life-giving fluids: water and blood. Bob was a research scientist and manager in water treatment. Peggy spent 31 years at a hospital blood bank. Now retired, they have, in a way, blended his career in the microbial world with her career in health care. They have planned a gift that will create multiple endowed faculty chairs and post-doctoral fellowships in the College of Natural Sciences. These assets will help strengthen the work of the John Ring LaMontagne Center for Infectious Disease.

“One of the ways to get and keep talent is to have these prestigious

chairs and postdocs,” says Marvin Whiteley, the center’s director. With grants trending smaller and shorter in duration, it’s harder than ever to guarantee faculty security. Providing that security as well as intellectual freedom is what this gift is going to do, he says.

The center’s 20 associated faculty members from molecular biosciences, integrative biology, engineering, pharmacy, and beyond compose a diverse arsenal to combat infectious disease and help the public understand the issues surrounding these diseases. The faculty’s diversity is key to remaining nimble enough to address whatever threat appears. Last year it was Ebola. This year it’s

the Zika virus. “Next year what’s it going to be? A parasite? A bacterium?” Whiteley says. Endowed chairs like the ones the Wetegroves will establish help provide the resources to allow faculty members to be versatile and responsive over many decades.

Bob Wetegrove says it was inevitable that he and Peggy would meet since they were both UT microbiology majors. But in fact they very nearly didn’t. Three years earlier, in 1966, Peggy was three feet away from Alex Hernandez, a newspaper delivery boy riding his bicycle, when he was struck by one of the bullets from the UT Tower. Peggy, who had come to campus from Fort Worth for freshman orientation, crouched

in bushes next to the Union for 90 minutes until the ordeal was over.

The day she met Bob, a Corpus Christi boy who was a T.A. in her public health course, she knew he was something special. “I was learning how to sterilize petri dishes. You had to wrap them in brown paper, tie them with string, and then take them to the autoclave. The first words I heard from Bob were, ‘About to get things all wrapped up?’ I was in love.”

Two weeks later, they were engaged and, a year later, married. In 1978, armed with five UT degrees between them, the Wetegroves moved to Chicago, where they each would spend more than three decades with a single employer. He worked for the global water treatment company Nalco, stimulating the growth of good microbes to kill off the bad ones in water systems. He went on to spend the latter part of his career in commercial development and marketing, as well as securing patents for the company. She went to work for the blood bank of Central DuPage Hospital, eventually managing its blood-donor program.

About 13 years ago, while still living in Illinois, the Wetegroves began thinking about their will. The first step toward their gift to UT came by chance. They were visiting campus when they ran into a microbiology professor on the Drag whom both had known as students. They decided to have a cup of coffee with Dr. James Walker. “I asked him what ways I could make the most impact with a gift to UT,” Bob recalls. “He talked in general terms about these various positions, and I took it away and chewed on it for a while.”

About 10 years passed before they began narrowing their focus. In 2013, they sat down with Natural Sciences dean Linda Hicke and her staff. “She had a whole train full of people come through and give their pitch, and we



Bob and Peggy as UT students in the late 1960s

decided microbiology and infectious disease are where we wanted to make our mark,” says Peggy.

Bob didn’t feel the biological sciences at UT got the credit they deserved. “Texas was always seen as stronger in chemistry and physics than in biological sciences.” So Bob and Peggy consulted with faculty who were still on campus from their time in school about what would raise the profile. Based on those discussions, they decided the best way to promote the field would be to establish chairs to attract several prominent faculty members to the department as well as postdocs. “Offering postdocs is a way of getting people in the earliest stages of their career to recognize the university as a good place. These are full-meal deal, nice packages,” says Bob.

In 2011 the Wetegroves moved back to Austin to be closer to family — and for warmer winters. “I told him I didn’t want to die in Illinois,” Peggy exclaims. “Texas is my home!” Now they enjoy another connection to UT, living at Longhorn Village, hearing visiting UT professors, musical performances, and going to Longhorn games.

“I am grateful to the university,” Bob says of his motive for giving. “It gave me the training in microbiology, and it seemed like it was an appropriate thing to do. We could have put the money any place, but it made sense to us to show some gratitude to the university.” Peggy says, “I felt the same. My career was very enjoyable, and it was because of my degrees from the university. We’re just very happy to contribute as much as we can.”

**Last year it was Ebola. This year it’s the Zika virus.
Next year it might be a parasite or a bacterium.**

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20TH ANNUAL TEXAS LEADERSHIP SOCIETY LUNCHEON

SAVE THE DATE, FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2017

Be a part of this milestone event, mingle with your friends, and learn about the latest on the Forty Acres. The theme will be "Rethinking Health Care," and we will hear faculty members and students from across disciplines share their stories about how UT is leading this effort.

The Texas Leadership Society is made up of individuals who have expressed their intention to support UT Austin through careful gift and estate planning.

It's not too late to become a member and join President Gregory L. Fenves for this special luncheon.

For more information, please contact the Gift and Estate Planning team at giftplan@austin.utexas.edu or call 800-687-4602.

Sample Will Language

Wondering how to include the university in your will?

Here's the language we suggest:

I hereby direct \$_____ (or _____ percent of my residual estate) in cash, securities, or other property to the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System for the benefit of The University of Texas at Austin.

This gift shall be for the further benefit of [college, school, unit] _____

and shall be used to [purpose] _____

As with any decision involving your assets and/or estate, we urge you to seek the advice of your professional counsel when considering a gift to The University of Texas at Austin.

COVER: When seeking solutions to complex challenges like health care, UT embraces the ecosystem model. In an ecosystem, numerous species sustain and balance each other, diversity flourishes, organisms collaborate, and nothing goes to waste.

ILLUSTRATION: MELINDA BECK

LEFT: Beloved UT administrator, professor, and historian Margaret Berry reconnects with former students at the Texas Leadership Society Luncheon.

PHOTO: BRIAN BIRZER

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