



# CHARTING PROGRESS

SAN ANTONIO MEDICAL FOUNDATION • *Founders and Directors of the South Texas Medical Center*

## Foundation Hosts Annual Educational Presentation

### Former Surgeon General Speaks on a Variety of Health Issues

Loneliness isn't the usual word medical doctors mention prominently in presentations. But the common situation of people without support systems plays an important role in the thinking of Dr. Vivek Murthy.

Dr. Murthy, who served as the 19<sup>th</sup> Surgeon General or America's doctor from December 2014 to April 2017, spoke on the topic "Healthcare: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" on April 18 at the San Antonio Medical Foundation's annual educational luncheon.

The son of immigrants from India became interested in medicine while watching his parents treat patients like family in his father's medical clinic in Miami. "It helped me see the power of relationships [in maintaining good health]," said Dr. Murthy. He observed that his grandfather was a poor man from a small farming village who had strong relationships with people in the community. Those relationships gave him a sense of purpose that caused him to spend time raising money for girls' education.

*"Many problems are social in nature, such as insufficient food, lack of housing and trauma in early life."*

*--Dr. Vivek Murthy*

These observations about the importance of strong relationships and the impact of loneliness have played an important role in Dr. Murthy's thinking. "We have the challenge of loneliness in the U.S. and the world," said Dr. Murthy. "The consequence of loneliness is a shorter life."

Dr. Murphy connects loneliness to the opioid epidemic. "The brain is structured to register emotional pain as physical pain," said Dr. Murthy. "People drown themselves in a variety of ways."

He says that multi-factored community-based programs are helpful in combating the opioid epidemic. Treatment and prevention must be integrated to "recognize the deeper emotional roots." He cited his own ah-ha moment in treating a homeless person when he realized the patient

wasn't in a position to take several pills each day.

"We won't be able to keep up unless we address underlying causes of health problems," said Murthy. "Many problems are social in nature, such as insufficient food, lack of housing and trauma in early life." He cites the needs of children: a loving home, good parents, support groups and peers but says many grow up without these needs being met.



*Dr. Vivek Murthy*

*Former U.S. Surgeon General*

When asked if e-cigarettes are safe, Dr. Murthy said they may help people quit smoking but they haven't been studied as much as other methods. He said a resounding "no, they aren't safe for kids. They are more likely to go on to regular cigarettes."

He believes we need to change the primary care model—how doctors are paid and the support for primary care—to encourage more medical graduates to enter the field.

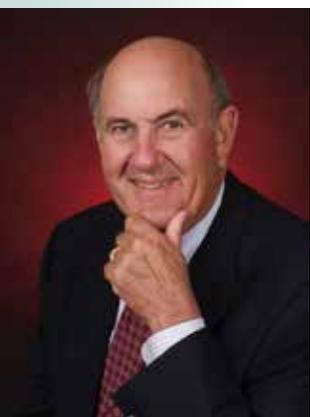
On the topic of vaccinations and individual liberty, Dr. Murthy says "Individual liberty is essential, but when we put other people at risk, it is a different issue."

Dr. Murthy holds a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and an M.D. and M.B.A. from Yale University.

Before becoming Surgeon General, he co-founded an HIV/AIDS education program in India and the U.S., a community health partnership to train women to become healthcare providers and a software technology company that improves research collaboration in clinical trials.

He treated thousands of patients in his practice and taught hundreds of medical students and residents while a faculty member in internal medicine at Harvard Medical School. He has conducted research on vaccines.

## Foundation Recognizes Reed for 20 Years of Service



*Jim Reed, President  
San Antonio  
Medical Foundation*

When Jim Reed joined the San Antonio Medical Foundation as president 20 years ago, the organization was \$100,000 in the hole. The Foundation was land rich but cash poor, said George Scofield, chairman of the Foundation board. Today the Foundation has a \$15 million endowment, \$1.4 million annual budget and will award about \$800,000 in research grants this year.

Scofield joined other members of the Board of Trustees in recognizing the work Reed has done during his 20 years as president. Projects completed during those years include:

- The Healthy Kids Project in conjunction with KLRN television.
- Green street project to transform Floyd Curl Drive into a landscaped roadway that is beautiful and safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- The website **sabioscience.org** focusing on bioscience research projects at 13 organizations throughout San Antonio.
- Building the walking/jogging trail with exercise equipment along the route.

"Jim was instrumental in all these successes," said Scofield. "No one in San Antonio knows more about the South Texas Medical Center."

To recognize his accomplishments, the Foundation has named the walking/jogging trail for Reed, has designated a Monterrey oak on the green street project as the Jim Reed tree and collected letters from past and current trustees in a memory book.

The Foundation surprised Reed with a scholarship fund in his name at UT Health San Antonio. The initial \$125,000 amount consisted of contributions from Reed's colleagues and friends, a significant contribution from Methodist Healthcare Ministries and \$50,000 from the Foundation. When presenting the check for the Jim Reed Scholarship Fund, Dr. William Henrich, president of UTHSA, announced that UTHSA will donate an additional \$25,000.



## Second Ronald McDonald House to Open in Medical Center

The second Ronald McDonald House in the South Texas Medical Center should begin serving families in early summer. Located just two doors down from the original Ronald McDonald House, at 4847 Charles Katz, the newest location will bring to four the total number in San Antonio.

The new facility built on land made available by the San Antonio Medical Foundation can accommodate 21 families, including five in a transplant wing that has kitchenettes. The transplant wing is unique to the facility.

The 26,000 sq. ft. facility also has four laundry rooms, large kitchen, game rooms and play room as well as an outdoor play area and patio.

“The second Ronald McDonald House is critically important,” said Pat Bivin, executive director for Ronald McDonald Charities. “Last year 180 families were turned away from the first house, because of lack of space.”

The largest of the four Ronald McDonald houses in San Antonio, the new facility more than doubles the capacity at the Medical Center. The original house can serve 20 families.

Two Ronald McDonald houses Family Rooms are located in Laredo. Because many of the families staying at the Medical Center are from Laredo, Bivin says those facilities help families to transition. “After visiting one of our Ronald McDonald House Family Rooms in Laredo, they know what to expect.”

The mission of Ronald McDonald House in San Antonio is to provide safe temporary living accommodations for critically ill children and their families while they are receiving medical treatment in San Antonio.

## UT Health Participates in Alzheimer’s Gene Discovery

An international team of researchers, including UT Health San Antonio personnel, arrived at new findings about the underlying

causes of Alzheimer’s disease, including five new genes that increase Alzheimer’s risk.

Sudha Seshadri, M.D., professor of neurology at UT Health San Antonio and founding director of the university’s Glenn Biggs Institute for Alzheimer’s and Neurodegenerative Diseases, is the principal investigator of the international group. Funded in part by the National Institute on Aging and other components of the National Institutes of Health, the study analyzed information from more than 94,000 individuals.

The project scrutinized more genetic data than any other study of Alzheimer’s disease to date. Collaborative data sharing enabled the scientists to discover five novel genetic variants or changes that influence the risk for Alzheimer’s disease.

Once the functions of the five genes newly associated with Alzheimer’s disease are understood and examined in conjunction with the functions of other genes known to influence risk, scientists will be in a better position to identify where the genetic hubs of Alzheimer’s disease are clustering. Armed with the findings, researchers can look more deeply into these genetic hubs to reveal disease mechanisms and potential drug targets.

## Winston School to Grow

The Winston School will make a \$9.7 million addition to its South Texas Medical Center campus. A new multipurpose building will house a variety of spaces, including a dining room, assembly hall, black-box theater, digital media classroom and other fine arts areas. The assembly space will allow for the expansion of Winston’s acclaimed educational outreach programs.

The campus at 8565 Ewing Halsell Drive serves students in grades K-12 and offers an array of outreach and extracurricular programs for families and students. It is the only accredited school in South Texas with the mission to serve students with diagnosed learning differences.

Graduating students this year earned more than \$970,000 in scholarships to continue their educations.

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**The mission of the San Antonio Medical Foundation is to provide leadership and active stewardship of our land and other assets to improve health care, advance biomedical science and enhance community well-being.**

The San Antonio Medical Foundation relies on contributions for its funding. Contributions are tax deductible, because the Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization.