



CHARTING PROGRESS

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

Research Database Surpasses 2,000 Projects

The San Antonio Bioscience Research database website now includes 2,055 research projects underway at 11 San Antonio bioscience research organizations. Participating organizations include two new institutions—Trinity University and the South Texas Veterans Health Care System—that will add their data soon.

The San Antonio Medical Foundation facilitated creation of the website that launched in September 2016 with 585 research projects listed.

“Three years ago, we had a sense that San Antonio was a bioscience research hub but that had never been quantified. We believed that such a database would be enlightening in itself and also increase collaborative efforts among scientists at these local organizations, as well as with their peers nationally and internationally once the depth of research underway here was revealed,” said George Schofield, Medical Foundation chairman.

“We also saw this website as an economic development tool for San Antonio since the information would be easily accessible not only for other scientists but for companies and research institutions outside the city that could lead to new partnerships and opportunities,” he said.

Now the website has grown from 585 projects to more than 2,000, an indication of the amount of bioscience research being conducted in San Antonio.

“The database not only captures the depth of our region’s globally-impactful research, it highlights the collaborative bioscience ecosystem developing in San Antonio across private sector, non-profit, education and military,” said Jenna Saucedo-Herrera, president of the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation. “Bioscience is an economic driver in our community and the database is a

tool to facilitate further collaboration and better market these assets globally.”

Using a password-protected system, each research organization can update its listings on the website as new research projects are begun.

Dr. Gabriele Niederauer, a member of the Medical Foundation’s Steering Committee and CEO of Bluegrass Vascular Technologies, continues to chair the committee for the project.

The website can be found at www.sabioscience.org. Projects are divided into 11 different categories, with cancer research representing the largest category.

Original Participating Research Organizations

Military

Brooke Army Medical Center
Naval Medical Research Unit
—San Antonio
USAF 59th Medical Wing at
Wilford Hall Ambulatory
Surgical Center

Non-profit

BioBridge Global
Southwest Research Institute
Texas Biomedical Research
Institute
UT Health San Antonio
University of Texas at San
Antonio

Corporate

Biomedical Development Corp.
Cancer Insight, LLC
EO2 Concepts

Trinity University and the South Texas Veterans Health Care System have recently joined the website project.

Collaboration Results in International Competition Win

Collaboration was the name of the game when Southwest Research Institute engineers and UT Health San Antonio pathologists teamed up to develop an automated method of detecting and quantifying breast cancer tumor cells. The collaboration earned the team first place in the BreastPathQ: Cancer Cellularity Challenge sponsored by the American Association of Physicists in Medicine, the National Cancer Institute and the International Society for Optics and Photonics.

The UT Health SA pathologists taught Southwest Research Institute engineers specialized in artificial intelligence and deep learning how to recognize breast

“Adapting an autonomous robotics algorithm to solve a health diagnostics problem shows that we have state-of-the-art techniques,” said Hakima Ibaroudene, SwRI engineer and challenge leader. “Our method has the potential to improve medical imaging, ultimately bolstering healthcare for cancer patients.”

Currently, pathologists track tumor response to therapy by determining the percentage of an area that is comprised of tumor cells. This task is performed manually and relies on experts to interpret complex tissue structures. A reliable automated method, like those developed in this challenge, would produce more consistent data while avoiding human error.

“Artificial intelligence and machine learning approaches to medical image analysis will provide pathologists with a powerful tool to more rapidly identify and quantify important image features,” said Dr. Bradley Brimhall, UT Health San Antonio pathologist and challenge participant. “In doing so, additional diagnostic and prognostic information will be available for providers to guide cancer treatment.”

“The SwRI artificial intelligence and deep learning team developed the winning algorithm in only four weeks, despite having no prior experience in cancer detection,” said Adam Hamilton, P.E., SwRI president and CEO. “While this feat demonstrates the power of AI and deep learning, it also underscores the incredible research potential of San Antonio’s collaborations.”

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*--Adam Hamilton, President and CEO
Southwest Research Institute*

cancer tumor cells. The engineers then trained a computer algorithm to analyze cell images, looking for defining characteristics that distinguish cancerous cells from normal ones.

Once trained, the SwRI algorithm successfully sorted through images provided for the challenge by the sponsors. The team ultimately outperformed 100 competing submissions by developing a process that matched the findings of human pathologists at the highest rate.



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NEXT Oncology Moves to Hospital Site in Medical Center

NEXT Oncology has signed an 11-year lease at the Medical Center Tower I, located on the campus of Christus Santa Rosa Hospital—Medical Center. The site allows for continuation of the organization’s Phase I clinical trial work, under the direction of well-known founder Dr. Anthony Tolcher.

The NEXT team includes 21 cancer research, regulatory and clinical professionals who have worked together for many years and who have been responsible for the preclinical and clinical development of 26 anti-cancer drugs that are now approved by the FDA and recognized as the standard-of-care treatment for many cancers.

The core team is also largely responsible for building an international network of Phase I sites with locations in Madrid, Shanghai, Taiwan and Grand Rapids. NEXT is partnering with Texas Oncology, the largest private oncology practice in the U.S., with more than 400 referring medical oncologists.

“We are very excited to be partnered with the powerful network of Texas Oncology, as it adds to our arsenal for bringing about future breakthrough therapies to a larger population of patients who have exhausted all other treatment options, and to create better medicine for patients everywhere,” said Dr. Tolcher.

The lease of 19,948 sq. ft. of space makes NEXT the only local Phase I program to locate on-site with a hospital.

“Having NEXT oncology on our hospital campus elevates our own cancer programs here at Christus Santa Rosa. We look forward to offering patients a high level of specialized, compassionate and comprehensive care close to home,” said Dr. Ian Thompson, president of Christus Santa Rosa Hospital—Medical Center.

University Hospital Receives Designation

University Hospital in the South Texas Medical Center has received designation from the Texas Department of State Health Services as a Level IV maternal center, the first in San Antonio. Only centers that provide comprehensive patient care to the highest-risk obstetric patients earn the designation.

The designation dovetails with the hospital’s Level IV neonatal intensive care unit designation awarded in 2017. The recognition certifies the highest level of continuous care available for pregnant women, mothers and their newborn babies.

Foundation Now on Social Media

The San Antonio Medical Foundation is now posting information on social media. You can follow the Foundation on Facebook: San Antonio Medical Foundation; Twitter: @SAMEDfound; and Instagram: @samedfound.

Clarity Child Guidance Center Reports 2018 Work

During 2018, Clarity Child Guidance Center treated 7,629 patients. Treatments included 17,928 hospital nights, 5,547 treatment days and 13,686 hours of therapy.

Success was measured by the fact that 88 percent of parents reported that their child improved as a result of the hospital care they received at Clarity.

Treatment programs include inpatient care for children in immediate crisis and/or children with long-term complex problems, day treatment and outpatient treatment for children who benefit from treatment without hospitalization.

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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.

FOUNDERS AND DIRECTORS OF THE SOUTH TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER

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