



CHARTING PROGRESS

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

San Antonio Medical Foundation Announces Collaborative Research Grants

The San Antonio Medical Foundation has approved six collaborative grants totaling \$1,042,047 to local bioscience projects being undertaken by teams at eight locally-based research institutions. The awards mark the first time that grants have exceeded \$1 million in one year.

The Foundation established the grant program in 2015 to encourage collaboration between healthcare and bioscience institutions in San Antonio, with the idea of providing grants that would seed new collaborative initiatives. The Foundation has now funded more than \$2.7 million in research projects since the program began.

Foundation Trustee Jelyne Burley, who chairs the Grant Review Committee, noted that interest in the grant program has grown rapidly since the first grants were funded in 2016 when it drew 12 applications. “This year, the Foundation received 44 applications,” she said.

Grant proposals are reviewed in light of the ability of their collaborative effort to leverage the strengths of each institution and raise the national and international research profile of the San Antonio bioscience and medical community.

This year, a team of researchers from Brooke Army Medical Center, Navy Medical Research Unit at San Antonio, UT Health San Antonio and the University of Texas at San Antonio was awarded \$131,340 for a project focusing on aging/neurologic disorders, seeking to predict stroke hemorrhagic conversion with a machine learning algorithm. The goal of the project is to develop an artificial intelligence model to address this gap in medical knowledge with the capacity to assess the risk for cerebral bleeding.

Southwest Research Institute, UT Health San Antonio and the University Health System were awarded \$199,948 to develop algorithms that will improve the speed and accuracy of cancer diagnosis and improve treatment. The project involves algorithms that will enable quantification of parameters for cancer detection and treatment.

The South Texas Regional Advisory Council and UT Health San Antonio will receive \$112,404 for a project that focuses on trauma and infectious disease. Project scientists hope to

improve sepsis care in greater San Antonio by promoting pre-hospital sepsis identification, identifying at-risk populations and designing a prevention campaign with the goal of influencing pre-hospital and hospital care.

A project on aging involving the South Texas Veterans Administration, UT Health San Antonio and UTSA was awarded \$200,000. The project involves disentangling dementia patterns using artificial intelligence on brain imaging and electrophysiological data. The research team hopes to advance Alzheimer’s Disease-related dementias research by filling in a gap with underrepresented data from the Hispanic population.

Southwest Research Institute, UT Health San Antonio and UTSA teamed up to receive \$198,592 with a project focusing on COVID-19. The project proposes studies that combine virology, high-throughput screening, medicinal chemistry and in-silico drug design expertise to identify molecules that disrupt binding of SARS-CoV-2 to ACE 2 and validate their potential to block SARS-CoV-2 entry to cultured epithelial cells.

A proposal from the Texas Biomedical Research Institute, UT Health San Antonio and UTSA has been awarded \$199,763 for another COVID-19 project focusing on the massive immune response triggered by the cytokine storm (macrophage activation syndrome—MAS). The excessive immune response emerges as the major cause of severe illness and death, even in young patients with no underlying conditions.

Medical Foundation Grant Recipients

Brooke Army Medical Center
Navy Medical Research Unit at San Antonio
Southwest Research Institute
South Texas Regional Advisory Council
South Texas Veterans Administration
Texas Biomedical Research Institute
UT Health San Antonio University Health System
University of Texas at San Antonio

Health Careers High School Expands Teaching Space

The Northside Independent School District’s Health Careers High School located in the South Texas Medical Center will expand its teaching facilities to better accommodate its growing student population.

The project involves renovating a building next to the school’s location at 4646 Hamilton Wolfe Road. The nearly 20,000 additional square feet of space will be connected to the main campus through a covered walkway and integrated with the original building through a safety fence.



The expanded Health Careers High School facilities will include a hospital demo classroom.

The renovated space will house a dental lab, medical assistant lab, pharmacy lab and classrooms, including a double one with a folding wall.

A hospital demo classroom will include a glass wall that will allow students to observe speakers and demonstrations. Equipment will be state-of-the-art. “The addition will take the school’s facilities to a higher level,” said Linda Burk, the school’s principal.

The original Health Careers High School was built with seed money and a land donation from the San Antonio Medical Foundation. The new addition also sits on property donated by the Foundation. The expansion project is funded through the NISD 2014 bond savings.

With a current enrollment of 910 students, the school not only prepares students to continue in higher education, including in medical, dental and nursing schools, but also offers programs that lead to jobs right out of high school.

“Sterile processing is a needed area,” said Burk. Sterile processing involves preparing trays of sterile instruments needed for surgery. “Students work in Medical Center hospitals as interns while in school and then can go to full-time jobs.”

Burk says the location in the Medical Center offers advantages for creating partnerships with other medical facilities there, though the school is missing many of the partnerships they had in the past because of the pandemic. Students have worked as interns in dental offices, hospitals and research labs. Fortunately, the lab work has continued virtually in many cases.

With students from five counties, the Health Careers High School has a waiting list of several hundred. The plan is to expand the enrollment by 50 each year until enrollment reaches 1050.



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UT-Health to Build Specialty Hospital

The San Antonio Medical Foundation has donated 12.4 acres of land valued at \$11.75 million for construction of a multispecialty and research hospital. UT Health San Antonio will build the hospital across from the Mays Cancer Center at the corner of Wurzbach Road and Floyd Curl Drive in the South Texas Medical Center.

The hospital will further the mission of UT Health in medical education, research and patient care. An estimated 100 medical residents and fellows will be added to UT Health and an additional 800 jobs created.

“We have received tremendous community support for our hospital, and we are excited our clinical partner of 52 years, University Health System, has agreed to join us in the endeavor,” said Dr. William Henrich, president of UT Health San Antonio.

Approval of construction details are expected in November. Construction will be completed in about three years.

Hamilton Wolfe to be Converted to Green Street

More than a mile of Hamilton Wolfe Road will be converted to a “green street,” the second in the South Texas Medical Center.

As the designation “green street” implies, the makeover of the street will include landscaping. The project also will emphasize safety through wide sidewalks and bicycle paths separated from traffic.

The project will begin at Babcock Road, continue to Ewing

Halsell Road, then turn south to the round-about to Tom Slick Drive, ending almost at Fredericksburg Road. Much of the Hamilton Wolfe route will coordinate with the existing walking/jogging trail that was completed in the spring 2009.

A project of the San Antonio Medical Foundation and Medical Center Alliance, the nearly \$6 million project will be funded by the City of San Antonio and Metropolitan Planning Organization. Planning and design work is currently underway and construction will begin during the city’s 2021-22 budget year.

Completed in the spring 2019, Floyd Curl Drive was the first “green street” in the Medical Center and has attracted enthusiastic use by walkers and bikers.

Dental School Celebrates 50 Years

The UT Health San Antonio’s School of Dentistry is celebrating 50 years serving the dental education and clinical needs of San Antonio and the surrounding area.

Located in the heart of the South Texas Medical Center, the school provides both a teaching environment for dental students, dental hygiene students and dental residents, as well as patient care from faculty members who are national and international leaders in their fields.

The highest ranked professional school in the University of Texas System, the School of Dentistry is number 7 in the nation in funded research.

The school will celebrate the anniversary with in-person events during the upcoming year when it is safe to do so.

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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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