

\$50 million gift from Harold and Annette Simmons to expand cancer care, clinical research programs

DALLAS - Nov. 2, 2005 - Dallas entrepreneur Harold C. Simmons and his wife, Annette, have given \$50 million to accelerate development of a nationally ranked cancer program at UT Southwestern Medical Center.

The gift will enable the Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center to implement a broad range of supporting programs and recruit 30 top cancer specialists to provide a critical mass for the major varieties of cancer, empowering it to achieve recognition as a National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center on an accelerated timetable.

"My family and I are very encouraged about the major progress being made [at the Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center], and we want to do what we can to ensure that the people of Texas have access to the finest cancer care in the country," said Mr. Simmons. "We feel that UT Southwestern can make it happen, and we're excited about what the future will bring."

The \$50 million gift, part of the medical center's \$500 million *Innovations in Medicine* campaign, equals the largest gift in UT Southwestern's history as well as the largest gift ever made to a Dallas organization.

In 1988 the Simmons family donated \$41 million to UT Southwestern. Of that, \$24 million established the Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center, a gift that was supplemented in 1999 with \$5 million and in 2004 with an additional \$15.4 million. Mr. Simmons also gave \$2.5 million for endowed distinguished chairs in cancer research named for his wife and daughters. Last month, he and Mrs. Simmons donated \$500,000, in memory of Dr. Charles Sprague, the first president of UT Southwestern, for a chair in clinical oncology.

"The Simmons gift is an investment in the future of Dallas and the nation, and it bolsters our hope to reduce the impact of cancer, and of eventually preventing and curing it," said [Dr. James Willson](#), director of the Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center and associate dean for oncology programs. "It will enable us to provide cancer patients with the highest quality of clinical care, establish groundbreaking clinical research, and develop an innovative cancer prevention program to reach out to the community and stop the disease."

To date, Mr. Simmons' family and foundation have donated more than \$125 million to support initiatives at UT Southwestern, more than \$97 million of it to enhance its cancer programs.

"The Simmonses are among the most generous medical philanthropists in the United States, and we are grateful beyond words for their indispensable support," said Dr. Kern Wildenthal, president of UT Southwestern. "This latest gift is truly transformative, and we are tremendously excited about the ambitious plans under way to bring our cancer center to its full potential for comprehensive excellence in all areas of cancer care and research."

Dallas-Fort Worth is the largest metropolitan area in the nation without an NCI-designated cancer center. A rigorous peer review is required to attain NCI comprehensive cancer center recognition. The center must excel in three major areas: basic research, clinical care and research, and cancer prevention and population-based research. It also must establish top-notch programs in outreach, education and cancer information for health-care professionals and interested citizens to take potentially life-saving information to the public.

The NCI designation, which Dr. Willson aims to achieve by 2009, would help North Texas patients gain access to the latest therapeutic drugs and other cutting-edge treatments through numerous nationwide patient trials run by the network of comprehensive centers.

"UT Southwestern has long been a research powerhouse with Nobel caliber science," said Dr. Willson, who holds the Lisa K. Simmons Distinguished Chair in Comprehensive Oncology. "Building on the foundation laid by Dr. Eugene Frenkel [who began UT Southwestern's division of hematology/oncology in 1962 and served as its chief for 30 years], our goal is to take this basic-research engine and apply it to our cancer treatment, prevention and clinical research



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efforts. The Simmons gift will allow us to do that."

Mr. Simmons, a native Texan who is one of the few self-made American billionaires, is the middle son of rural schoolteachers. After he graduated from UT Austin in 1952 with a master's degree in economics and a Phi Beta Kappa key, he worked first for an agency of the U.S. government and then for a Dallas-based bank. At age 29, he borrowed money to buy a small drugstore, using his \$5,000 savings for a down payment. Within a decade he had built a statewide drugstore chain worth more than \$50 million.

He sold the drugstore chain in 1973 and launched a career as an investor. He has prospered as a brilliant and creative financier and now controls numerous companies, including five corporations listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

In 1988 Mr. Simmons established the Harold C. Simmons Foundation, for which he serves as chairman, with two of his daughters as co-trustees. His commitment of \$41 million to UT Southwestern in 1988 ranked as the largest philanthropic gift in Dallas history at the time and was one of the largest gifts ever made for medical research in the United States.

Annette Simmons, a graduate of Southern Methodist University, has served on a variety of civic organizations, including the boards of the National Kidney Foundation of Texas, the Parkland Foundation, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and the Crystal Charity Ball. Her community involvement has earned her numerous awards, including the Crystal Charity Ball Hall of Fame Award in 1997 and the Dallas County Medical Society Alliance's Champ Award in 2003. She and her husband received Southwestern Medical Foundation's Charles Cameron Sprague Community Service Award in 1995 and the Annette G. Strauss Humanitarian Award in 2000.

In addition to cancer programs, previous support from the Simmons family and foundation at UT Southwestern led to the creation of the Harold C. Simmons Arthritis Research Center, an arthritis chair, and the Simmons Biomedical Research Building named for his parents. In 1998 a gift from the Simmons Foundation established a Violence Intervention and Prevention Center run by Parkland Health & Hospital System - believed to be the first of its kind in the United States. Recently, the Simmons family pledged \$5 million for Parkland's planned outpatient surgery center. And earlier this year the Simmons Foundation made a \$5 million gift to establish the Annette Simmons Heart Hospital at Children's Medical Center Dallas.

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