

ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS AND UPDATES FROM DR. W. P. ANDREW LEE

January 15, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to start the calendar year 2021 by sharing with you the success of the Special Grant Incentive (SGI) Program we established at the beginning of FY20, or 16 months ago.

Under the SGI program, faculty members who are awarded a second or third federally funded research grant receive an incentive of \$10,000 either as personal compensation or as discretionary academic or laboratory development funds. Eligible grants are two or more years in duration, provide at least \$100,000 of direct cost per year, and convey full indirect costs.

In total, 56 federal grants by our faculty were awarded the special incentive in FY20, significantly exceeding our original expectations, which were based on historical data. Almost 70% of the NIH grants that were awarded SGIs were new grants, while the remainder were competitive renewals. The departments of Molecular Biology, Microbiology, Biochemistry, and Internal Medicine received the most number of SGIs, and one investigator was awarded three SGIs!

I am delighted to report that the initial experience in the SGI program upheld the long-standing tradition of research quality over quantity at UT Southwestern.

In a year where state grant expenditures decreased by 12%, and grants from industry, foundations, private sponsors and endowments increased only by 3%, federal grant expenditures increased by 19%.

Federal grants validate the quality of our science, influence our institution's rankings and bring indirect cost recovery, allowing us to expand early investigation research projects that might not otherwise have established funding and grow our entire research program.

At UT Southwestern, our research mission is to solve for unmet needs through scientific discovery and impact. Grant funding is only a means to these ends. Yet, the increase in federal research grant funding we are experiencing is the direct result of ingenuity and dedication by our investigators, as well as the mentorship and supportive venues provided by our department chairs and center directors. Their successes should make us all proud.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to advancing UT Southwestern’s research efforts and impact. Remarkably, these accomplishments happened during a year that posed incredible professional and personal challenges. I am inspired by your resilience and look forward to supporting your work so we can carry through another successful year.



Sincerely,

Andy

W. P. Andrew Lee, M.D.

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Dean, UT Southwestern Medical School

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