



Enhancing Direct Communication with Faculty

Through the StandPoint Faculty Engagement Survey and Faculty Senate input, our faculty members have expressed their desire for enhanced direct communication with academic leadership.

Spurred by this feedback, [the Provost leadership team](#) will roll out a new series of department visits starting later this fall. Unlike the department visits that were initiated in late 2019 but interrupted by the pandemic, faculty interaction will be structured as a two-way dialogue.

W. P. Andrew Lee, M.D., Provost and Dean of the Medical School, will start each visit by providing updates on the academic priorities for the institution, key programs, and expectations in mission areas. Joan Conaway, Ph.D., Vice Provost and Dean of Basic Research, and Eric Peterson, M.D., Vice Provost and Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Research, will share relevant information related to our research enterprise. Cameron Slocum, M.B.A., Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for Academic Affairs, will present a brief overview of the Medical School finances. For visits to the clinical departments, the new Executive Vice President for Health System Affairs [Jonathan Efron, M.D.](#) is expected to join.

Department Chairs and Center Directors will help tailor the visit to suit their individual department or center in terms of the content and format of the meeting. The department will have an opportunity to showcase their activities and, most importantly, discuss opportunities and challenges. All faculty members are encouraged to attend the visits.

Additionally, Dr. Lee and select Vice Provosts will be meeting regularly with the Faculty Senate's presidential line: (pictured from left) Jo-Ann Nesiama, M.D., President; Helen King, M.D., President Elect, and Nicolai Van Oers, Ph.D., Past President.



The [Faculty Senate](#) (network connection or VPN required) represents the faculty in communicating important matters to and from the administration. It is composed of elected members from every department.

2023 Joy in Medicine Program Honors UT Southwestern

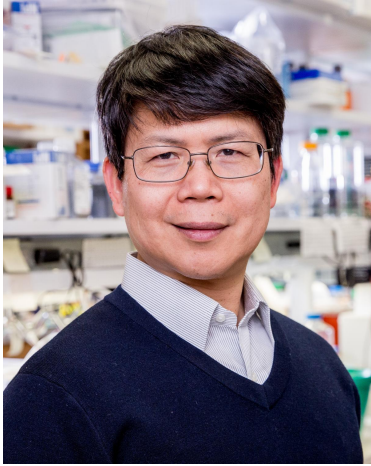


UT Southwestern Medical Center received Gold status as part of the prestigious American Medical Association (AMA) [2023 Joy in Medicine Health System Recognition Program](#), which honors health care organizations that prioritize the well-being and satisfaction of their medical workforce.

The program celebrates efforts to reduce system-level drivers of work-related burnout and create a culture of wellness that positively impacts the lives of clinical care teams. Out of the total of 72 institutions receiving this accolade from the AMA, only 10 were recognized at the highest level, including UT Southwestern.

Faculty Announcements

Dr. Chen Receives Prestigious Horwitz Prize



[Zhijian "James" Chen, Ph.D.](#), Professor of Molecular Biology, has been awarded the 2023 [Louisa Gross Horwitz Prize](#) in recognition of his groundbreaking work on innate immunity.

The Horwitz Prize is presented by Columbia University in recognition of outstanding contributions in basic research in the fields of biology or biochemistry. Nearly half of the scientists who have received the Horwitz Prize over the past 56 years subsequently were awarded the Nobel Prize.

Dr. Chen, who also received the 2019 Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences, is one of the world's top researchers on innate immunity – the body's response to pathogens that quickly identifies and destroys cells and tissues that have been attacked.

He discovered the first mitochondrial protein known to be involved in immunity against infections and named it MAVS (mitochondrial antiviral signaling), after his favorite basketball team, the Dallas Mavericks. More recently, he identified cGAS (cyclic GMP-AMP synthase), which triggers the innate immune system when it detects foreign DNA inside a cell. [Read more.](#)

NIH Director's New Innovator Award Recognizes Dr. Maddipati

[Ravikanth Maddipati, M.D.](#), Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine and in Children's Medical Center Research Institute at UT Southwestern, has been awarded \$1.5 million from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to support research investigating positional heterogeneity in cancer, or how tumors in the same organ can behave differently based on where they form.

The NIH Director's New Innovator Award, disbursed over a five-year period, is from the NIH Common Fund's High-Risk, High-Reward Program. Established in 2007, the program supports early-career investigators pursuing highly innovative research with the potential to have a broad impact on biomedical, behavioral, or social sciences. [Read more.](#)



Improve Your Teaching Skills

The Office of Faculty Development is partnering with the [Association of College and University Educators \(ACUE\)](#) to offer our faculty an educational learning opportunity rooted on evidence-based practices to enhance their teaching skills.

This initiative is part of a strategic plan to escalate our educators' capacity to teach using research-backed methodologies and optimized curriculum designed to boost performance.

A fully online, asynchronous learning experience, each six- to eight-week course requires approximately two hours of activity per week. At the end of each course, faculty will receive micro-credentialing credits that can be added to their curriculum vitae.

The first course – Inspiring Inquiry and Preparing Lifelong Learners – starts Jan. 16, 2024. [Apply by Nov. 16.](#)



HHMI's Hanna Gray Fellows Announced

Two UT Southwestern trainees are among the 25 early-career scientists to be selected as [2023 Howard Hughes Medical Institute \(HHMI\) Hanna H. Gray Fellows](#). The program supports talented postdoctoral scientists who represent a promising future for biomedical science. Lisandro Maya-Ramos, M.D., Ph.D., and Alexandra Wells, Ph.D., will each receive up to eight years of support for their research, plus professional development, and mentorship. [Read more.](#)

Dr. Maya-Ramos aims to unravel how a fat tissue-derived peptide signals to the heart, resulting in inflammation and fibrosis. His mentors are Joseph A. Hill, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Internal Medicine and Molecular Biology, and Philipp Scherer, Ph.D., Professor of Internal Medicine and Cell Biology.



Dr. Wells studies how the body defends against viral infections with the goal of revealing how molecules that carry out the counterattack pave the way for improved methods to test potential therapies. Her mentor is John Schoggins, Ph.D., Professor of Microbiology.

2023 Texas State Employee Charitable Campaign



The 2023 State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC) – the only authorized workplace charitable giving campaign for state agency and higher education employees in Texas – is underway.

The impact of a single donation cannot be overstated, nor can the combined generosity of the UT Southwestern community. There are [more than 1,000 charitable organizations](#) to choose from, so you can give to the causes and organizations that resonate with your values and passions.

UT Southwestern is aiming to raise \$350,000 this year. The campaign runs through Oct. 31.

[How to give](#)

Important Dates and Upcoming Events

Weight Wellness Day

Presented by the [Nutrition and Obesity Research Center \(NORC\)](#), the symposium includes an obesity treatment bootcamp to help evaluate and support patients. CME and MOC credits are available for a nominal fee.

- Oct. 14. [Register to attend.](#)

Pilot and Feasibility Granting Opportunity

Young investigators conducting research on obesity, metabolism, and nutrition may apply for awards funded by NORC.

- [Apply by Oct. 16.](#) For submissions and questions, contact UTSWNORC@utsouthwestern.edu.

Successfully Earning a K (SEAK) Grant Writing Workshop*

SEAK weekly workshops will keep you accountable as you write sections of your grant application for review at each session, turn in a completed grant at the conclusion of the program, and take part in a mock study section as part of the process.

- [Apply by Oct. 23.](#)

Fall Faculty Reception

[This year's event](#) combines the ideas of synergizing work goals with personal values intentionally to achieve satisfaction within your career. The program includes a faculty panel discussion.

- Oct. 25, 4–6 p.m., A.W. Harris Faculty Club, E4.400-South Campus

New Faculty Research Forum

Featuring recently appointed Assistant Professors, [this forum](#) fosters interdisciplinary collaborations and cultivates an environment where innovation flourishes.

- Oct. 30, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. [Register early](#) to secure a box lunch at the event.

Grant Writing Library*

UT Southwestern faculty members have free access to a [grant writing library](#) designed to help researchers in the process of securing National Institutes of Health funding.

- Contact the [CTSA Program](#) to [request free access.](#)

**Sponsored by the UT Southwestern CTSA Program*



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