

64th

Annual Medical Student Research Forum

UT Southwestern
Medical Center



Showcasing student excellence in medical research

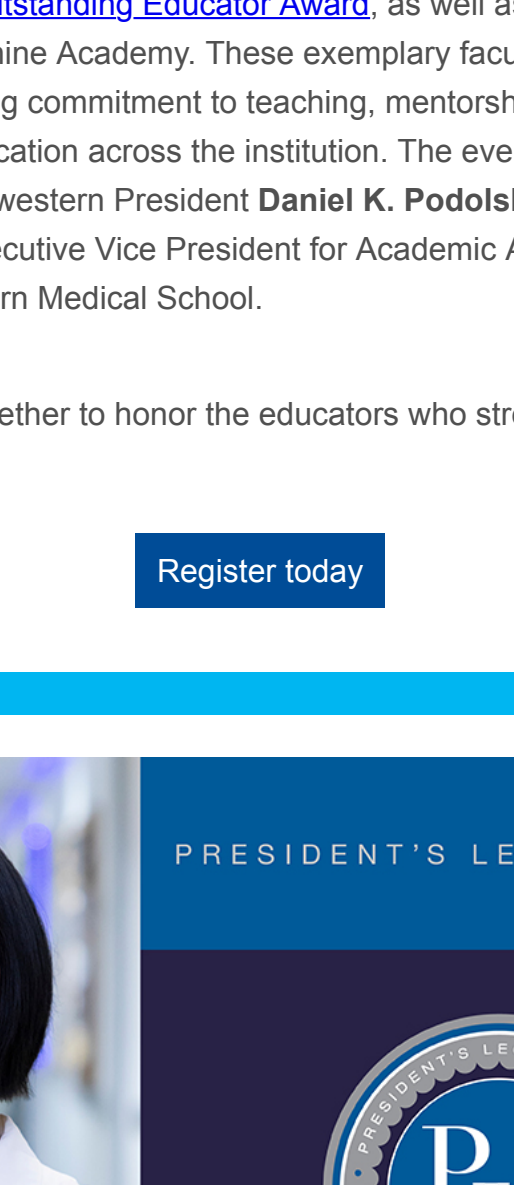
The 64th Annual Medical Student Research Forum, held Jan. 27, showcased impressive research conducted by UT Southwestern medical students and featured oral presentations by four students and a keynote address by **Robert W. Haley, M.D., FACE, FACP**, Professor of Internal Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases and Geographic Medicine.

The student presenters (pictured above) included:

- **Daniela Tovar** – “Cardiac Biomarkers as Prognostic Indicators of Renal Function After Liver Transplantation: Findings from the Avoiding Cardiovascular Complications in Liver Transplantation (ACCT NOW) Study”
- **Eleanor Dowell** – “Analysis of the RNA Content of Exosomes from HPV+ Squamous Cell Carcinomas”
- **Will Hurley** – “Biomechanical Validation of 3D-Printed PLA Humeral Diaphysis Models: A Cost-Effective, Customizable Alternative for Orthopedic Research”
- **Lauren Patterson** – “Impact of Donor Diabetes on Lung Transplant Outcomes”

Additionally, out of 161 applicants, 68 students were selected to present posters on their research projects. You can find the winners' names and photos on [Facebook](#).

Congratulations to all of the presenters for their outstanding contributions to medical research!



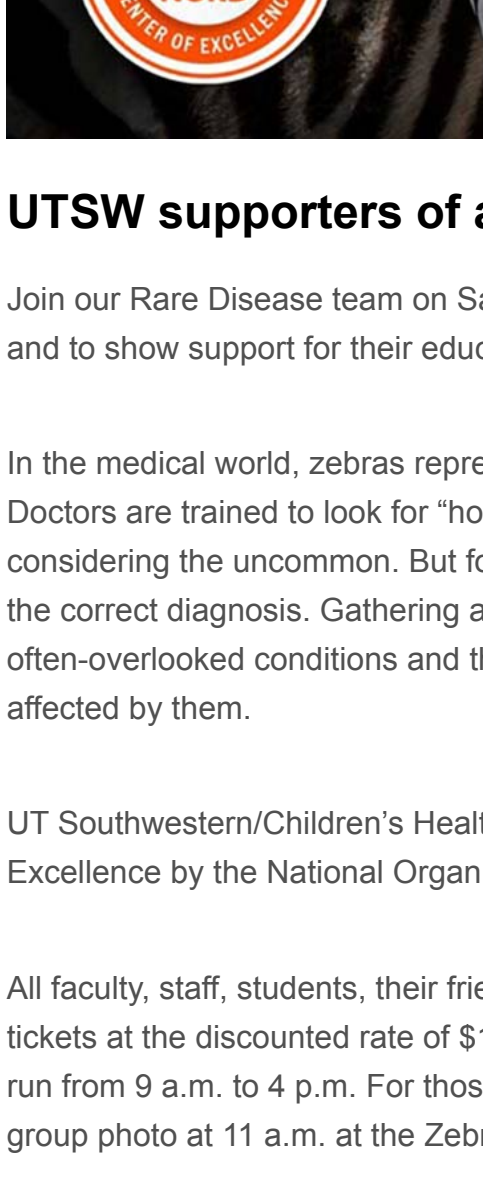
Don't miss the opportunity to celebrate our educators

The Southwestern Academy of Teachers (SWAT) invites the UT Southwestern community to join Celebrating Excellence in Education on **March 5** from 4:30-6 p.m. in the McDermott Lecture Halls (D1.600), with a reception immediately following.

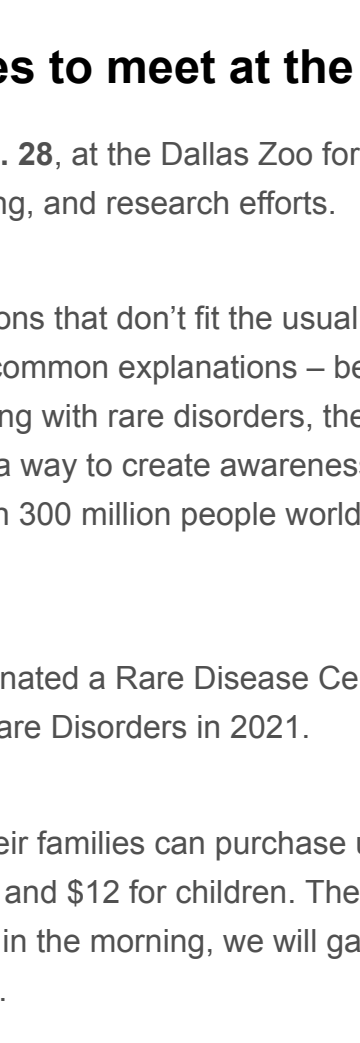
This ceremony will recognize the recipients of the UTSW [2025 Distinguished Educator Award](#) and [Outstanding Educator Award](#), as well as the [2025 inductees](#) into the UT System's Shine Academy. These exemplary faculty members demonstrate an enduring commitment to teaching, mentorship, and innovation that continues to shape education across the institution. The event will also feature remarks from UT Southwestern President **Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.**, and **W. P. Andrew Lee, M.D.**, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Provost, and Dean of UT Southwestern Medical School.

Join us as we come together to honor the educators who strengthen and inspire our community every day.

[Register today](#)



PRESIDENT'S LECTURE SERIES



Event reminder: Solving a cellular merger mystery

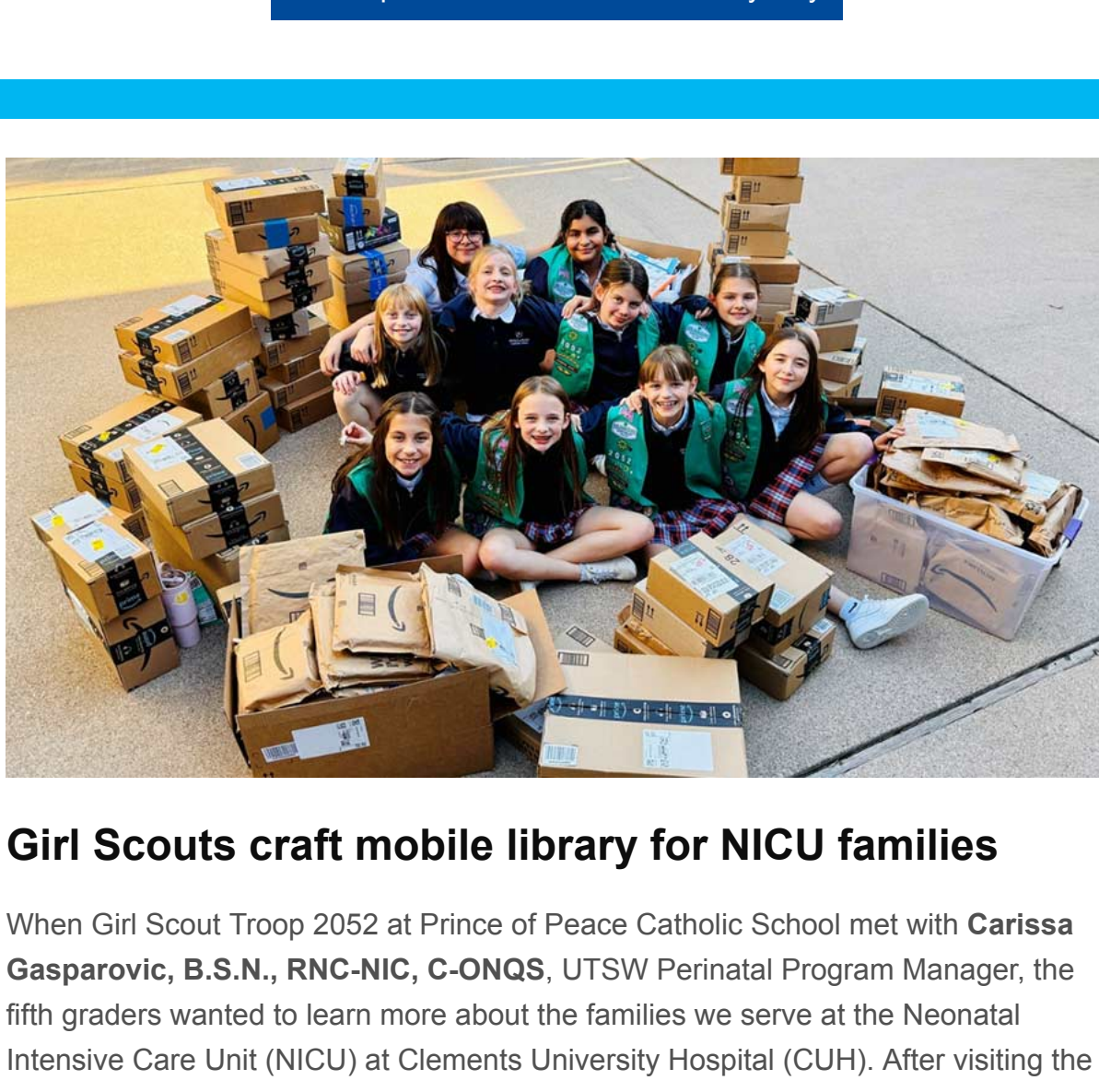
Discover how cells merge to create and regenerate skeletal muscle in the next President's Lecture this Thursday, **Feb. 26**, featuring **Elizabeth Chen, Ph.D.**, Professor of Molecular Biology and Cell Biology.

In her compelling presentation, “How Two Cells Become One,” Dr. Chen will unpack the groundbreaking science behind cell-cell fusion – a process at the heart of conception, placental formation, immune defense, bone remodeling, and skeletal muscle development and regeneration. Enjoy a clear, engaging look at a fundamental biological process with far-reaching implications.

The event begins at 4 p.m. in the Tom and Lula Gooch Auditorium, followed by a reception for the entire UT Southwestern community. A livestream option will also be available for those unable to attend in person.

Learn more about Dr. Chen and her work on [Center Times Plus](#).

[Reserve your spot today](#)



UTSW supporters of all stripes to meet at the zoo

Join our Rare Disease team on Saturday, **Feb. 28**, at the Dallas Zoo for a day of fun and to show support for their education, training, and research efforts.

In the medical world, zebras represent conditions that don't fit the usual pattern. Doctors are trained to look for “horses” – the common explanations – before considering the uncommon. But for people living with rare disorders, the “zebra” is the correct diagnosis. Gathering at the zoo is a way to create awareness of these often-overlooked conditions and the more than 300 million people worldwide affected by them.

UT Southwestern/Children's Health was designated a Rare Disease Center of Excellence by the National Organization for Rare Disorders in 2021.

All faculty, staff, students, their friends, and their families can purchase up to six tickets at the discounted rate of \$15 for adults and \$12 for children. The event will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For those of arriving in the morning, we will gather for a group photo at 11 a.m. at the Zebra enclosure.

Note: The discount will be reflected on the order summary page.

[Purchase discounted tickets](#)



5 tips for a healthy Ramadan fast

Ramadan, the most sacred month of the year for Muslims, began **Feb. 18** and will end on **March 19**. During this time, a strict “dry” fast – no food or drink – is observed during daylight hours.

In her MedBlog, **Zaiba Jetpuri, D.O.**, Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine, offers tips for staff and patients who wish to fast safely, including:

- Restructure your days
- Taper off caffeine
- Prioritize hydration
- Exercise strategically
- Moderate your food celebrations

[More tips on how to fast in a healthy way](#)



Girl Scouts craft mobile library for NICU families

When Girl Scout Troop 2052 at Prince of Peace Catholic School met with **Carissa Gasparovic, B.S.N., RNC-NIC, C-ONQS**, UTSW Perinatal Program Manager, the fifth graders wanted to learn more about the families we serve at the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Clements University Hospital (CUH). After visiting the unit, the Scouts chose to focus on helping NICU infants as their Bronze Award project.

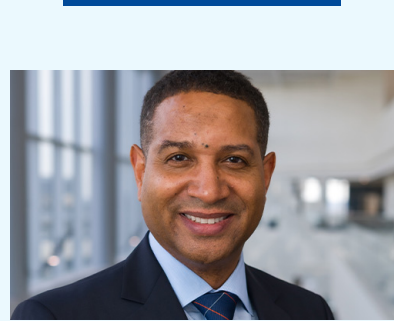
The Bronze Award is the highest award a Junior Girl Scout can earn. It requires identifying a real need in the community and collaborating with a local organization to design a lasting solution. For their project, the troop lovingly created the Connection Cart, a mobile library designed to support families during their UTSW NICU journey and beyond.

The Connection Cart helped the Scouts learn how to listen, collaborate, problem-solve, and take action that will create positive ripple effects throughout their community. It will also support an upcoming research study focused on the impacts of early reading from caregivers on infant development, postpartum depression, and bonding, making it possible for CUH's NICU to further support our families during their stay while also pursuing this important research.

Thank you, Girl Scout Troop 2052, for all your hard work – 500 books and the mobile cart were donated to the unit on Feb. 9!

[View more photos on Instagram](#)

Insider Guide



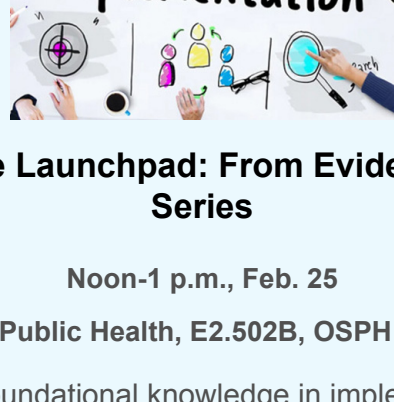
Black History Month Luncheon

11 a.m.-2 p.m., Feb. 24

Tom and Lula Gooch Auditorium (C), Southside Dining C1.100

In honor of Black History Month, the Auxiliary Restaurant Group and the African American Alliance BRG are proud to host a collaborative celebration. The event will feature music, raffles, food available for purchase, and an opportunity to experience and celebrate Black culinary traditions.

[Get the details](#)



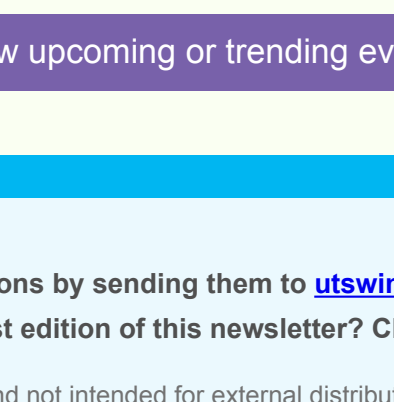
Black History Month Celebration

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Feb. 25

Hybrid, South Campus, D1.600

Join the UTSW community for dishes from local Black-owned restaurants and a musical performance by The Big Easy Brass Band. The keynote speaker will be **Romaine Johnson, M.D., M.P.H., FACS**, Associate Dean for Student Affairs at the Peter O'Donnell Jr. School of Public Health and Professor of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery and of Health Data Science and Biostatistics. The program will also be livestreamed on UTSW's [YouTube channel](#).

[Register today](#)



Implementation Science Launchpad: From Evidence to Practice Speaker Series

Noon-1 p.m., Feb. 25

Peter O'Donnell Jr. School of Public Health, E2.502B, OSPH Classroom on South Campus

This monthly series offers foundational knowledge in implementation science through a combination of didactic lectures and interactive discussions. Join to learn how the program can help you successfully apply evidence-based and evidence-informed practices in health care, public health, and policy settings.
Topic: Implementation Strategies

[Learn more](#)



UTSW Events Calendar

Looking for your daily dose of happenings?

The UTSW Events Calendar is updated every day.

[View upcoming or trending events](#)

Share your *Insider* suggestions by sending them to utswinsider@utsouthwestern.edu. Looking for an item in a past edition of this newsletter? Check out our [Insider archive](#).

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