

UT Southwestern Medical Center

Passing of Alfred G. Gilman, M.D., Ph.D.

December 23, 2015

It is with great sadness that we have learned of the passing today of our colleague and friend, Nobel Laureate Dr. Alfred G. Gilman, former Dean of the UT Southwestern Medical School, as well as former Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost at UT Southwestern Medical Center. Dr. Gilman died after a long illness. He was 74 years old.

Speaking for the entire UT Southwestern community, we offer our most heartfelt condolences to Dr. Gilman's family, as well as to his many friends and colleagues here and around the world.

Dr. Gilman was a giant in medical research. In 1994, Dr. Gilman shared the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine with Dr. Martin Rodbell of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences for their discovery of G proteins (guanine nucleotide-binding regulatory proteins). G proteins are central to signaling transduction, the process of receiving signals from outside the cell and activating a range of cellular responses.

It is now known that G proteins are found in virtually all cells, and are central to fundamental body processes including vision, smell, hormone secretion, and thinking in humans. Problems in G-protein signaling contribute to a range of diseases, including cholera, whooping cough, and cancer.

Dr. Gilman's discovery of G proteins and their critical functions is a cornerstone of research across virtually every important domain of medicine. As a scientist, teacher, and leader, Dr. Gilman's contributions are legion. He mentored many scientists who have gone on to become leaders in their fields, and his dedication to serving UT Southwestern was unwavering.

Dr. Gilman served as Chairman of Pharmacology at UT Southwestern for more than two decades. He retired from the Medical Center in 2009 as a Regental Professor Emeritus to assume the position of Chief Scientific Officer of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT), a position he held until 2012.

On Dec. 4, 2014, the UT System Board of Regents approved the creation of the Alfred G. Gilman Distinguished Chair in Pharmacology, which honors his numerous contributions to UT Southwestern over his 28-year career here, and supports the Chairman of the Department of Pharmacology and efforts in Pharmacology. The endowment, totaling \$1 million, was made possible by the generosity of donors and longtime friends of the Medical School who wished to honor Dr. Gilman's legacy at UT Southwestern. The inaugural holder of the chair is Dr. David Mangelsdorf, Chairman of Pharmacology at UT Southwestern, who was Dr. Gilman's successor in the Department.

As a leader in the scientific community, Dr. Gilman was outspoken in defense of scientific integrity and in advocating for rigorous science education. In 2012, he became the first UT Southwestern Nobel Laureate to donate his medal to the Perot Museum of Nature and Science, saying it gave him enormous pleasure to think that it might inspire a new generation of scientists.

Although Dr. Gilman will be deeply missed by all who knew him, his enduring legacy will live on at UT Southwestern.

We extend deepest sympathies to his wife, Kathy; to his children, Amy Ariagno, Anne Sincovec, and Ted Gilman; and to all other members of his family for their loss.

Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.
President, UT Southwestern Medical Center