

UT Southwestern Medical Center

Dr. Daniel Foster, former Chairman of Internal Medicine: 1930-2018

January 19, 2018

It is with great sadness that we have learned of the passing of Dr. Daniel Foster, Professor and former Chairman of Internal Medicine at UT Southwestern Medical Center. Dr. Foster died Thursday. He was 87. The entire UT Southwestern community offers our most heartfelt condolences to Dr. Foster's family and to his many friends and colleagues, here and around the world.

Dr. Foster's long and varied medical career, which began as a medical student at UT Southwestern, took him from working as a research fellow at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to serving as a member of the President's Council on Bioethics, and from holding a Department Chair to hosting a popular weekly medical TV show.

Dr. Foster always led by example, starting with important contributions to science through his discovery of an essential mechanism of metabolism – the malonyl-CoA regulatory system for fatty acid oxidation and ketogenesis. These eventually proved to have wide implications in the hypothalamus, where it contributes to the regulation of food intake; in the heart, where fatty acid oxidation influences the outcome of myocardial infarction; in the liver and for nonalcoholic fatty liver disease; and in obesity, where increased mitochondrial function may cause weight loss.

For those discoveries and others, Dr. Foster was elected in 1989 to the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine) and to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1992. He also received the Banting Medal, the American Diabetes Association's highest scientific honor; the Joslin Medal; the Founders' Medal of the Southern Society for Clinical Investigation; and the Lukens Award.

He was equally respected as an ethicist and educator, including as Headmaster of the Academic Colleges at UT Southwestern Medical School and as President of The Academy of Medicine, Engineering and Science of Texas (TAMEST). And he was popularly known for the nationally televised program, *Daniel Foster, MD* on the Public Broadcasting Service, a weekly BBC program, and was likewise passionate about discussing the intersection of religion and science.

Although we will miss his engaging personality, his distinctive career will continue to be honored through the legacy of several chairs, including the Daniel W. Foster, M.D. Distinguished Chair in Internal Medicine, held by Dr. Perry Bickel; the Daniel W. Foster, M.D. Professorship in Medical Ethics, held by Dr. John Sadler; and the Kent and Jodi Foster Distinguished Chair in Endocrinology, in Honor of Daniel Foster, M.D., held by Dr. Jeffrey Zigman.

Private family services are planned.

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