

UT Southwestern Medical Center

Donald Hilgemann, Ph.D., and Margaret Phillips, Ph.D., Elected to the National Academy of Sciences

April 26, 2021

I am writing today to share the wonderful news that our colleagues, **Donald Hilgemann, Ph.D.**, and **Margaret Phillips, Ph.D.**, have been elected to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). Election to the NAS is one of the highest honors that can be bestowed upon American scientists, and it is a privilege for UT Southwestern to see two colleagues added to this esteemed group.

Dr. Hilgemann, Professor of Physiology, Internal Medicine, and in the Charles and Jane Pak Center for Mineral Metabolism and Clinical Research who holds the Floyd C. Rector, Jr., M.D. Professorship in Acid-Base Regulation, and the Roy and Christine Sturgis Chair in Biomedical Research, is being recognized for his innovative research studying sodium transporters, which are cell surface proteins that move sodium ions across the cell membrane. In addition to his studies of the heart, Dr. Hilgemann, a member of the UT Southwestern faculty for more than 30 years, examines how cells regulate sodium transporters through membrane remodeling. To accomplish this goal, he and his colleagues have developed innovative electrical and optical tools that measure changes in the size of the cell membrane.

Dr. Phillips, Professor of Biochemistry and Pharmacology who holds the Sam G. Winstead and F. Andrew Bell Distinguished Chair in Biochemistry, joined UT Southwestern in 1992 and was appointed Chair of Biochemistry in 2016. She is recognized as one of the leading authorities on drug development for the treatment of malaria and parasitic diseases. Although malaria was eradicated from the United States in 1951, it remains one of the world's deadliest infectious diseases, claiming nearly 500,000 lives each year. Among her previous honors, Dr. Phillips received the 1999 Scholar Award in Molecular Parasitology from the Burroughs Wellcome Fund. In 2010, Dr. Phillips' research team won the Medicines for Malaria Venture Project of the Year award for their efforts to discover DSM265, which kills drug-resistant malaria parasites in the blood and liver by targeting their ability to replicate.

The National Academy of Sciences is a private, nonprofit institution that recognizes achievement in science by election to membership, and – with the National Academy of Engineering and the National Academy of Medicine – provides science, engineering, and health policy advice to the federal government and other organizations.

We are honored that the National Academy of Sciences has recognized the importance of research done by Dr. Hilgemann and Dr. Phillips in the fields of biochemistry, pharmacology, and physiology.

With today's election, UT Southwestern now has 25 faculty who are members of the NAS, the most of any institution in the state of Texas and a distinction reserved for only the most elite academic medical centers in the country.

Please join me in congratulating our esteemed colleagues on this recognition of their exceptional contributions to advancing biomedical science.

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