



## 2025 Leaders in Clinical Excellence Award winners

September 5, 2025

To the UT Southwestern Community:

In the spirit of our institutional commitment to the highest standards of patient care, we are delighted to announce the recipients of the 2025 UT Southwestern Leaders in Clinical Excellence Awards.

Established in 2018, these awards recognize clinical faculty across our many sites of service for their exceptional contributions to the care of our patients, to the education and training of the next generation of health care professionals, and to the advancement of UT Southwestern overall. There are seven award categories, including the Patricia and William L. Watson Jr., M.D. Award for Excellence in Clinical Medicine, UT Southwestern's highest honor in clinical care. This year's award recipients once again serve as an inspiration to us all.

You will be able to read more about each winner identified below in an upcoming feature on *Center Times Plus* as well as in a future print edition of *Center Times*. We also hope you will join us at the awards **ceremony Nov. 5 at 4:30 p.m.** in the Tom and Lula Gooch Auditorium. More details will be forthcoming.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to recognize these outstanding colleagues as well as those who were represented in nearly 200 total nominations. A special thanks also goes to members of the Leaders in Clinical Excellence selection committee, led once again by John Mansour, M.D., Professor of Surgery and Vice Chair of Quality in the Department of Surgery, and Maeve Sheehan, M.D., Professor of Pediatrics and Associate Vice President of the Pediatric Group Practice, for all their efforts in helping us celebrate clinical excellence at UT Southwestern.

**Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.**

President  
UT Southwestern Medical Center

**Jonathan Efron, M.D.**

Executive Vice President for Health System Affairs  
UT Southwestern Medical Center

**W. P. Andrew Lee, M.D.**

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost  
Dean, UT Southwestern Medical School

## 2025 Leaders in Clinical Excellence Award Recipients

### **Patricia and William L. Watson Jr., M.D. Award for Excellence in Clinical Medicine**

This prestigious award, UT Southwestern's top honor for clinical care, recognizes a faculty physician who exemplifies excellence in patient care, is a leader in advancing clinical innovations and outcomes, and has had a profound impact on patients, students, trainees, and patients.

**Sidarth Wakhlu, M.D.**, Department of Psychiatry

### **Rising Star Award**

This award recognizes exceptional early-career clinical faculty whose actions and activities consistently exemplify commitment, professionalism, and leadership.

**Nicholas Hendren, M.D.**, Department Internal Medicine  
**Caroline Park, M.D.**, Department of Surgery

### **Institutional Service Award**

This award honors clinical faculty who consistently share time and expertise in service to internal committees, task forces, and other institutional activities that make a significant impact on the care delivered to UT Southwestern patients.

**Susan Matulevicius, M.D.**, Department of Internal Medicine; Associate Dean of Faculty Wellness

### **Mentoring Award**

This award celebrates clinicians who demonstrate exceptional commitment and effectiveness as mentors to health care providers.

**Benjamin Nguyen, M.D.**, Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
**Gilberto Salazar, M.D.**, Department of Emergency Medicine

### **Patient and Family Recognition Award**

This award honors clinical faculty whose dedication to the compassionate, respectful delivery of exceptional patient care has garnered the highest degree of patient trust and satisfaction.

**Yu-Guang He, M.D.**, Department of Ophthalmology  
**James Thornton, M.D.**, Department of Plastic Surgery

### **Program Development Award**

This award celebrates the innovation and collaboration that are foundational to the success of UT Southwestern Medical Center. It recognizes a group of clinical faculty and staff who have worked together as a team to create, develop, and sustain an innovative program that significantly advances our ability to improve the care received by our patients.

**Burn Reconstructive Program**  
Led by **Samuel Mandell, M.D.**, Department of Surgery

### **The President's Award for Humanism in Clinical Care**

This award honors clinical faculty who exemplify the humanistic spirit of patient-centered medicine, both through clinical excellence and in outstanding compassion in the delivery of care.

**Melanie Sulistio, M.D.**, Department of Internal Medicine