

National Academy of Sciences elects three UTSW faculty members

Please join us in congratulating UT Southwestern faculty members **Elizabeth Chen, Ph.D.**, **Ralph DeBerardinis, M.D., Ph.D.**, and **Joel Elmquist, D.V.M., Ph.D.**, who were elected on Tuesday to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), one of the highest honors for American scientists.

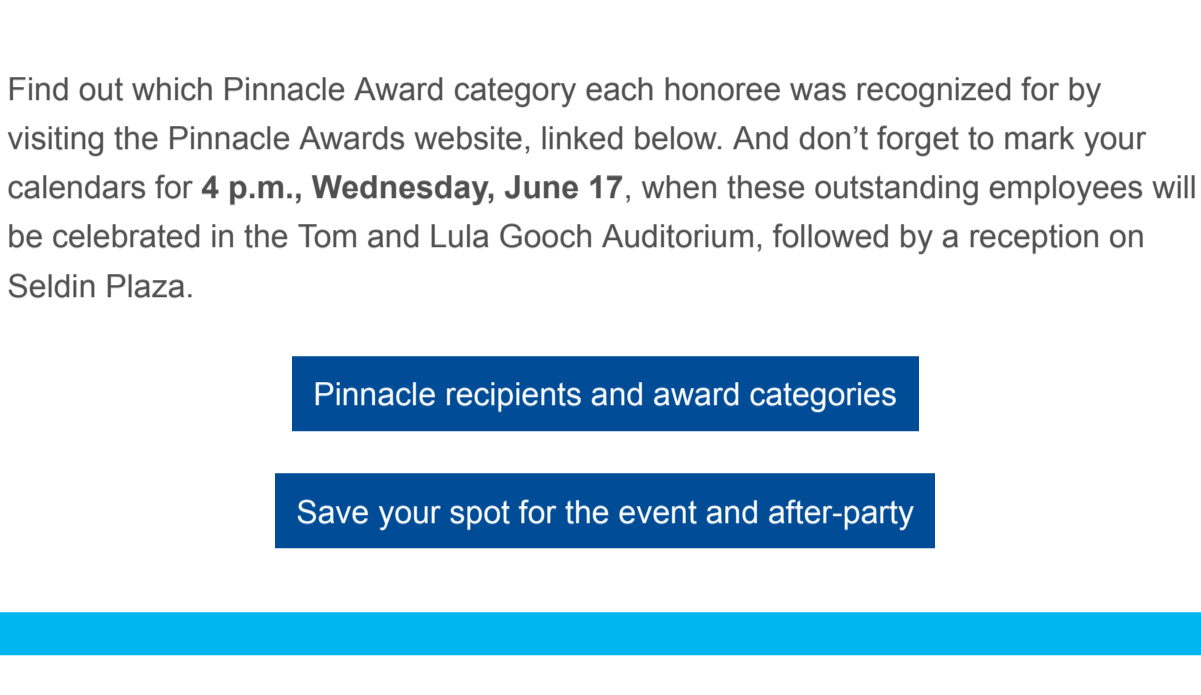
Dr. Chen, Professor of Molecular Biology and Cell Biology and a member of the Development and Cancer Research Program at the Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center, is being recognized for her fundamental discoveries defining how cells fuse during development.

Dr. DeBerardinis, Director of the Eugene McDermott Center for Human Growth and Development, Director of the Genetic and Metabolic Disease Program in Children's Medical Center Research Institute at UT Southwestern, and Professor of Pediatrics, is an international leader in cancer metabolism research and has reshaped the understanding of how tumors and genetic diseases reprogram metabolic pathways.

Dr. Elmquist, Professor of Internal Medicine, Pharmacology, and Psychiatry and Director of the Center for Hypothalamic Research, is recognized for transformative insights into how the brain regulates energy balance, glucose metabolism, and body weight.

UTSW now counts 27 NAS members among its faculty – more than any other institution in Texas and the most in our history.

[Learn more about the new NAS members](#)



Reaching the pinnacle of excellence

As many of you read in a message from UT Southwestern President **Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.**, the recipients of our campuswide Pinnacle Awards were announced on Monday.

Congratulations to the honorees and all those nominated by colleagues who work in areas across our institution, spanning Academic Affairs, Business Affairs, Health System Affairs, and Institutional Advancement.

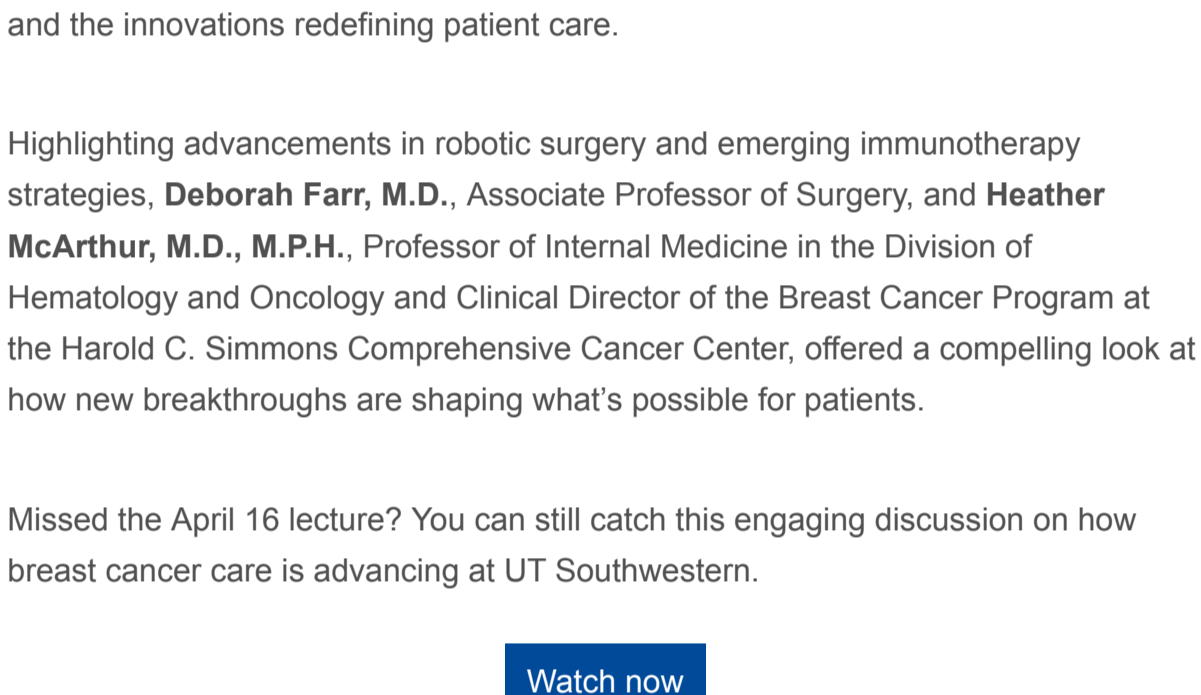
For 2026, the Pinnacle Awards recognize five individuals and one team whose work reflects excellence across UT Southwestern:

- **Jose "Joe" Flores**, Automotive Mechanic
Fleet Maintenance Operations – Facilities, Business Affairs
- **Darren Fleming**, Senior Regulatory Associate
Clinical Research Office – Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center, Academic Affairs
- **Hugo Lopez**, Automation Integration Specialist
Central Data Acquisition System and Controls – Utilities, Business Affairs
- **Chelsea Landon**, Director, Health System Emerging Strategies
Health System Strategy & Business Development, Health System Affairs
- **Office of Student Financial Aid**
Office of the Provost – Academic Affairs
- **Priscilla Olivares**, Clinic Staff Assistant III
Ambulatory Clinic – Bariatrics, Texas Health Dallas, Health System Affairs

Find out which Pinnacle Award category each honoree was recognized for by visiting the Pinnacle Awards website, linked below. And don't forget to mark your calendars for **4 p.m., Wednesday, June 17**, when these outstanding employees will be celebrated in the Tom and Lula Gooch Auditorium, followed by a reception on Seldin Plaza.

[Pinnacle recipients and award categories](#)

[Save your spot for the event and after-party](#)



Get a front-row seat to ideas in motion

Groundbreaking ideas are moving out of UT Southwestern labs and into the real world – and the [Innovation Hub](#) is helping make it happen.

This campus resource – designed to help clinicians and scientists turn promising ideas into viable solutions – and the people driving it will be front and center at Innovation Hub Live on **Thursday, May 7**. There, UTSW leadership and Hub experts will share why innovation is a strategic priority for the institution and how the Hub supports researchers at every stage of the journey.

Attendees will also get a live demonstration of the Discovery Information Management System (DIMS), the UTSW-built platform that brings greater structure, visibility, and momentum to new ideas.

Want a sneak peek? Watch a new [Unscripted video](#) featuring **Daniel Hommes, M.D., Ph.D.**, Chief Innovation Officer. Dr. Hommes shares his journey from growing up in the Netherlands to becoming both a physician-scientist and a cancer patient, experiences that shaped his commitment to move discoveries to patients as efficiently as possible.

Whether you're actively working on a new idea or curious about how innovation happens at UTSW, this event offers an up-close look. Lunch will be provided, and a livestream option is available.

[Get an inside look](#)



#ICYMI: Innovations in breast cancer care

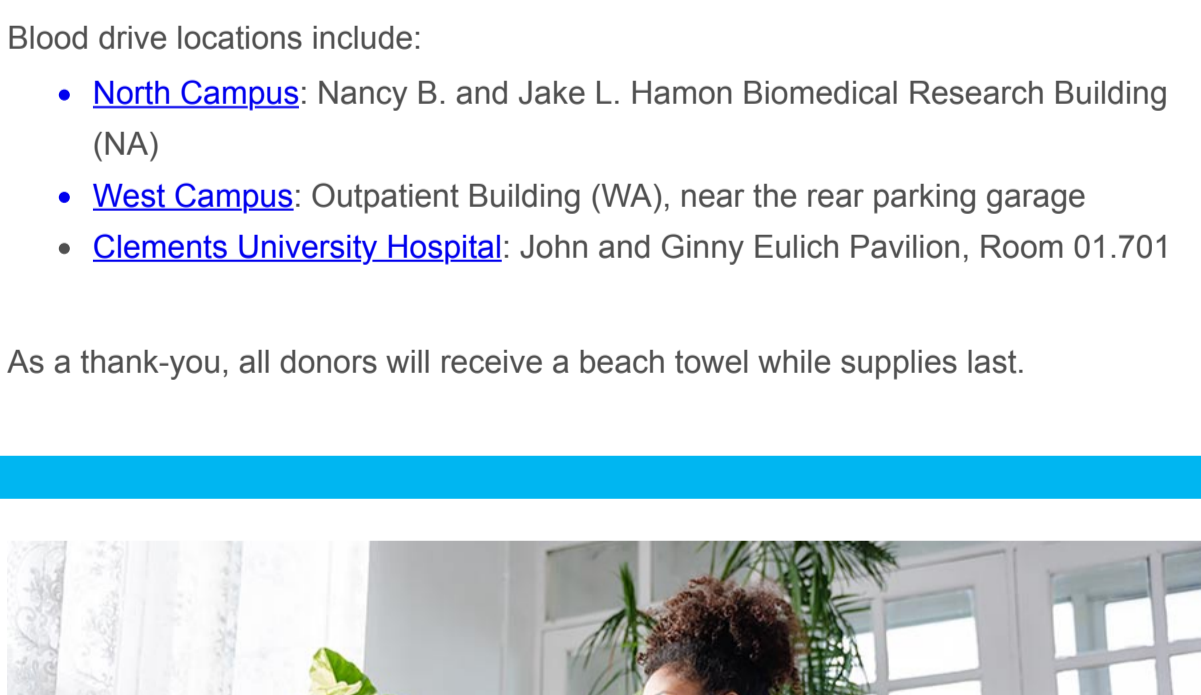
Two internationally recognized cancer researchers took the stage at the latest President's Lecture to explore the changing landscape of breast cancer treatment and the innovations redefining patient care.

Highlighting advancements in robotic surgery and emerging immunotherapy strategies, **Deborah Farr, M.D.**, Associate Professor of Surgery, and **Heather McArthur, M.D., M.P.H.**, Professor of Internal Medicine in the Division of Hematology and Oncology and Clinical Director of the Breast Cancer Program at the Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center, offered a compelling look at how new breakthroughs are shaping what's possible for patients.

Missed the April 16 lecture? You can still catch this engaging discussion on how breast cancer care is advancing at UT Southwestern.

[Watch now](#)

On-campus network connection or VPN required.



The story behind UTSW's academic mace

Whenever UT Southwestern students gather to take the last steps of their academic journey at commencement, the **Vernie A. Stembridge, M.D.**, Academic Mace leads the way.

Carried by a distinguished professor each year, the mace represents the authority of the faculty to grant degrees as it honors our long legacy of teaching and discovery.

The piece was designed by **Gordon Green, M.D., M.P.H.**, a UT Southwestern Medical School alumnus, Professor Emeritus, and retired Dean of the former School of Allied Health Sciences, now the School of Health Professions. Created in memory of Dr. Stembridge, a beloved faculty member from 1959 to 2000, the mace is rich with meaning and symbolism.

At the crown of the mace sits an amethyst that Dr. Green discovered in a shop in Corinth, Greece.

"I spied it immediately: A small table lamp, with a fist-sized great amethyst mounted on one side," Dr. Green recalled.

After purchasing it, he used tools borrowed from hotel maintenance to detach the gem from the lamp and bring it home to Texas.

Traditionally associated with healing of mind, body, and spirit, the stone also represents service and humility. Designed with both polished and natural facets, the gem reflects the transformative power of education.

Beneath the gemstone, seven detailed bas-relief cameos tell UT Southwestern's story – from the healing arts and team-based care to biomedical discovery, public service, and the passing of knowledge across generations. The mace's wooden shaft, carved from American black walnut, is shaped to evoke the torch of learning.

To get a closer look at the mace, visit [@UTSWArchives' Instagram](#) and see detailed images of its craftsmanship alongside rare historical photos of its use across generations of graduates.

[Learn more on Instagram](#)

Join a study to determine if an antidepressant helps reduce asthma attacks

Escitalopram is a commonly prescribed antidepressant used to treat mood and anxiety disorders. But researchers at UT Southwestern are exploring whether it might also help people with asthma without depression. Previous studies have shown that people with both asthma and depression who took escitalopram had fewer asthma flare-ups and better overall asthma control.

This study will look at whether escitalopram can reduce the number of serious asthma attacks compared with a placebo.

Who can participate? Adults between 18 and 75 who:

- Speak English or Spanish
- Have moderate-to-severe asthma
- Have had three or more severe asthma exacerbations in the past year
- Are currently treated with medium-to-high dose inhaled corticosteroids (ICS) and long-acting beta agonist (LABA) therapy

Study details:

- The 26-week study requires monthly visits that include assessments, questionnaires, pulmonary function testing, and blood draws.
- Participants will be compensated for their time.

If you're interested in participating in this study, please [email](#) or call 214-645-6950 to find out if you meet the eligibility criteria.

[Find out if you're eligible](#)

Your blood donation could save lives

Hospitals across North Texas rely on a steady blood supply to care for patients every day, and right now donors are urgently needed.

You can make a lifesaving difference by participating in the Carter BloodCare Blood Drive on **Thursday, May 7**. Appointments are preferred and can be scheduled by texting "CBCDonate" to 999-777 or using the registration links below. Walk-ins are also welcome when capacity allows.

Blood drive locations include:

- **North Campus:** Nancy B. and Jake L. Hamon Biomedical Research Building (NA)
- **West Campus:** Outpatient Building (WA), near the rear parking garage
- **Clements University Hospital:** John and Ginny Eulich Pavilion, Room 01.701

As a thank-you, all donors will receive a beach towel while supplies last.

Strive for Five: Small steps, big impact, better health

Ready to refocus on you? Now's the perfect time to jump into Strive for Five, a fun and rewarding wellness challenge through the Healthier U Club on Limeade.

This program, which runs through **Aug. 31**, encourages you to take meaningful steps across five key areas that impact everyday health:

- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Lower back pain
- Asthma
- Heart health

How to get started

[Log in to Limeade](#), complete a quick well-being assessment, and choose the wellness areas that matter most to you. Each area includes five to seven simple, engaging activities, all labeled Healthier U Club, designed to build awareness and give you practical tools you can use right away.

As you progress through the Healthier U Club activities, you'll unlock prizes, including branded tumblers, duffel bags, large totes, Bluetooth speakers, and more!

[Take the first step](#)

Experience the rich flavors of India at Skyline Café 14

11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Today

T. Boone Pickens Biomedical Building (ND14)

Head to the ND14 Skyline Café today for an Indian-inspired feast. Savor classic Indian flavors and enjoy the lovely views. Cost is \$12.79 per plate, not including tax.

[Dig in for the details!](#)

Campus Art Walk

Noon to 1 p.m., Today

Donald Seldin Plaza

Led by **Courtney Crothers**, Art Curator and Director, Office of Campus Life, this guided walk highlights Seldin Plaza's outdoor sculptures and landscape. Discover the artists, the nature-inspired design, and how public art shapes our campus.

[Register to attend](#)

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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