

UTHRO Endowment

We are proud of our UTHRO Endowment for Healthy Aging and throughout the year we encourage UTHRO members to contribute to it. For our newer members, and as a refresher for our long-time members, a little history of the origin of the UTHRO Endowment for Healthy Aging may be in order. From the organization's inception in 1993 until about 2010, UTHRO functioned primarily as a means for social interaction among retirees, a way to stay connected, to participate in fun and educational activities, and a means to stay in touch with activities of UTHealth. Around 2010 under the leadership of Fran Knight, the organization decided to present an annual Excellence Award and conducted fund raising every year, giving the money to the UTHealth Consortium on Aging Brain Health Clinic to help fund some of their projects in geriatrics.

In 2016, the Executive Committee presented a proposal to the membership to establish the UTHRO Endowment for Healthy Aging, administered through UTHealth, instead of giving the Excellence Award each year. This was approved by the membership. It was felt that by establishing an endowment, monies could be accumulated and earn interest to be used to support patient care, education and clinical research related to aging. It started with a group of Founders, both UTHRO members and friends, who contributed the \$25,000 required to initiate the Endowment. Through annual fundraising, it has grown to the current amount today. We hope that the fund will continue to grow and generate more interest so that we can make significant contributions in support of our motto of "Seniors Helping Seniors".

This is an opportunity to build a legacy for our organization, to leave something of value to UTHealth, and to contribute to the exciting research in geriatrics from young investigators. It is the hope that you, the UTHRO members, think that this is an important project and will continue to support it and help it grow. The amount does not matter, and all contributors are kept confidential. Consider giving in someone's memory or in someone's honor as a gift. Help UTHRO continue to support this important project.

The late Carmel B. Dyer, MD established the UTHealth Houston Consortium on Aging in 2010 and as of May 2023 it has evolved into the UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging. This transition consolidates the previous university-wide collaboration to better advance research, education, and clinical care for older adults. UTHRO continues its steadfast support. Shortly before her untimely death in May 2021 Dr. Dyer expressed her appreciation for the support received from UTHRO:

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and members of UTHealth Consortium on Aging at UTHealth, I want to thank the UT Houston Retiree Organization (UTHRO) for their generosity in establishing the UTHRO Endowment for Healthy Aging. This endowment supports interprofessional education, clinical care, and research to enhance the health of older adults, and we are deeply grateful for UTHRO's commitment to our mission.

Over the past year, this endowment has been instrumental in supporting the Consortium on Aging. Notably, we used funds to produce a handbook on dementia that clinicians can provide to families who have a loved one diagnosed with the disease. Additionally, the endowment provided seed funding for research, education, and community projects to enhance the physical and emotional health and social engagement of older adults in the Houston community. [UTHRO Evergreen, March 2021]

by Peggy O'Neill