Texas Instruments’ Gift Creates Early Career Faculty Award at UTD

Longtime Supporter Donates $5 Million for New Electrical and Computer Engineering Endowment

ON THE OCCASION of The University of Texas at Dallas’ 50th anniversary, Texas Instruments made a $5 million gift to create an endowment that will support early career faculty members in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering within the Erik Jonsson School of Engineering and Computer Science.

The Texas Instruments Early Career Award in Electrical and Computer Engineering is designed to help UT Dallas attract and retain promising scholars who have the potential to become leaders in new and emerging research fields. Faculty members eligible for the award will be in the early stages of their academic careers and must demonstrate an ability to compete for extramural funding. Award recipients will receive $50,000 a year for up to six years to support their independent research activities.

“Texas Instruments and UT Dallas have a shared history through our founders, so it is fitting that we honor them and their vision for electrical engineering talent in North Texas with this gift from TI,” said Rich Templeton, chairman, president and CEO of Texas Instruments. “It’s our hope that the new endowment, as well as all we do to collaborate with UTD, reflects TI’s desire to see the University maintain engineering as central to its mission and to produce students who are equipped with both technical and entrepreneurial skills and to be a source of great local talent.”

UT Dallas has rapidly become one of the nation’s leading research institutions. In 2016, the University was recognized by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as an R1 institution — a classification reserved for doctoral institutions with “very high research activity.” In 2018, UT Dallas qualified for funding from the National Research University Fund, an exclusive source of research support available to Texas’ emerging research universities upon the attainment of critical benchmark criteria.

As the University’s research profile grows, new resources are necessary to compete for top talent. By providing startup funding, the Texas Instruments Early Career Award will provide a competitive advantage for recruitment and will help make UT Dallas an attractive destination for sought-after faculty.

“Texas Instruments’ gift commemorates the shared history between TI and UT Dallas. Three of Texas Instruments’ founders — Eugene McDermott, Erik Jonsson and Cecil Green — observed promising young Texans leaving the state to pursue educations elsewhere. Simultaneously, TI leadership struggled to import out-of-state talent to work at their Dallas-based headquarters. Hoping to introduce better higher education opportunities in North Texas, the trio of visionaries created the Graduate Research Center of the Southwest, the foundation for what would become UT Dallas. In 1969, the institution’s land and assets were transferred to the state of Texas, officially joining the University with The University of Texas System.

In order to sustain UT Dallas’ incredible growth and success, it is critically important that we expand our faculty with the best available talent,” said Dr. Richard L. Benson, president of UT Dallas. “I am grateful to Texas Instruments for helping us achieve this goal and look forward to the impact these new faculty members will make in their fields, for our students and for the economic well-being of our region.”

“Texas Instruments’ gift creates new avenues for our University to make an impact in the world.”

— Dr. Stephanie G. Adams
Dean of the Erik Jonsson School of Engineering and Computer Science
Lars Magnus Ericsson Chair

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p10 Rita Allen Foundation Supports Biomedical Research
“Engineering is central to the
mission of UT Dallas, and this
gift reflects TI’s desire to see
that continue. We can’t wait
to see the impact of this
endowment for UT Dallas.”
— Dr. Peter Balyta MBA’03

Private Support Fuels Record Philanthropy at UT Dallas

Throughout UT Dallas’ first 50 years, philanthropic contributions from TI have helped drive the University’s evolution. When TI built a fabrication facility in Richardson in 2003, company leadership ensured that corporate tax incentives from the new building would be reinvested locally. As a result, UT Dallas received $320 million from the state of Texas, the UT System and other donors. This enabled the creation of the Natural Science and Engineering Research Laboratory.

Support from TI has funded the Texas Analog Center of Excellence and the Texas Biomedical Device Center, as well as the creation of six endowed faculty chairs, important student fellowships and scholarships, and numerous other research initiatives. TI also supported the construction of the Davidson-Gundy Alumni Center, and the building’s namesake — Texas Instruments Inspiration Hall — bears the company’s name.

“IT’s hard to imagine where UT Dallas would be without Texas Instruments’ continued investment,” said Dr. Stephanie G. Adams, dean of the Erik Jonsson School of Engineering and Computer Science and Lats Magnus Ericsson Chair. “As a generous benefactor, research partner and top employer of our graduates, TI continues to create new avenues for our University to make an impact in the world.”

The TI Early Career Award endowment extends this foundation in perpetuity, helping recruit top engineering talent to the North Texas region. The gift is the largest single

commitment to UT Dallas made by TI, the University’s longest supporter.

Throughout the past decade, while alumni giving nationwide is declining, the number of UT Dallas graduates who donate to their alma mater has continued to increase year over year since 2012. In fiscal year 2019, more than 7,000 total donors made nearly 13,000 contributions to UT Dallas, a 15% increase in gifts over the previous two-year period.

“Historic gifts of art played a substantial part in the recent fundraising success. Announced late last year, the Barrett Collection of over 400 works of Swiss art marked the single-largest donation ever made to the University, as well as the largest gift of art to any school in The University of Texas System. Within months, the entire collection of the Tennent and Margaret Cane Museum of Asian Art, along with $25 million of support funding, was donated to UT Dallas. Dallas philanthropist and UT Dallas Center for BrainHealth supporter Beatrice “Bea” Wallace also invested $5 million in the expansion of arts at the University, inspired by UT Dallas’ increased commitment to and appreciation for the arts.

“For half a century, philanthropic support has played a significant role in the evolution of UT Dallas, and it is increasingly vital as we build upon our momentum over the next 50 years.” — Kyle Edgington PhD’13

The number of individuals, companies and foundations who contribute to UT Dallas has steadily increased over the past decade. While alumni giving nationwide is declining, the number of UT Dallas graduates who donate to their alma mater has continued to increase year over year since 2012. In fiscal year 2019, more than 7,000 total donors made nearly 13,000 contributions to UT Dallas, a 15% increase in gifts over the previous two-year period.

Efforts such as Comets Giving Day, a fundraising initiative launched in 2017, provide opportunities for the UT Dallas community to come together in support of the University. During the third annual event in April, donors made 2,276 gifts in an 18-hour period, driving a 58% increase in overall results compared to the previous year.

“Gifts of every size make a difference,” Edgington said. “When considering the aggregate impact of private support, it is evident that philanthropy provides the degree of excellence that over time differentiates world-class institutions.”

In 2009, the University’s endowment was valued at $195.1 million and included 170 individual endowed funds. Today, the overall endowment exceeds $508 million and represents more than 670 endowments, 60% of which were established over the past two years under the leadership of UT Dallas President Richard C. Benson.

“Endowed funds provide a perpetual source of support crucial to all great universities,” Benson said, who holds the Eugene McDermott Distinguished University Chair of Leadership. “Individuals who establish such funds are essentially making an everlasting gift to UT Dallas in support of students, faculty, programs or whatever is meaningful to that donor.”

In 2018, a $5.5 million gift from the estate of Maxine Johnson, who was the original first lady of UT Dallas as the wife of Dr. Francis “Frank” Johnson, the University’s first acting president, created eight endowed chairs and became the largest planned gift to the University. The contribution established the Francis S. and Maxine C. Johnson Distinguished University Chair, as well as seven additional chairs in the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

“UT Dallas has benefited from a long history of philanthropic generosity, and the resulting transformation of campus and impact on the region is all thanks to such tremendous generosity,” said Mike Brodie BSN’76, chair of the UT Dallas Executive Board. “With the enthusiastic support of alumni, donors and friends, UT Dallas is well positioned to continue its rapid growth for the next 50 years and beyond.”

Learn more at utdallas.edu/development.

Leadership Message

AS WE COMMEMORATE UT Dallas’ 50th anniversary this year, we recognize the invaluable role that philanthropic support from alumni and friends has played in our university’s history. Looking toward the next half-century and beyond, this issue of Momentum celebrates those contributions that are shaping a bright future for our students, faculty and community.

One of the most important areas impacted by donor support is the success of our scholarship programs. UT Dallas also relies on a comprehensive series of scholarships and aid packages — funded through both philanthropic gifts and institutional funds — to attract top student talent and increase accessibility to students from all backgrounds. Our National Merit Scholars Program is the hallmark of this endeavor.

National Merit Scholars are selected from among the very best high school students in the country each year. UT Dallas offers these students competitive scholarship packages that have made our University a top 10 destination for National Merit Scholars for the past two years. In 2018, 195 National Merit Scholars enrolled as freshmen at UT Dallas.

The nationwide scope of our National Merit Scholars Program helps expand our University’s profile outside of Texas, allowing us to bring the best students into the state. With scholarships remaining in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex after graduation, this program makes a meaningful impact in growing the professional talent pool for the region.

Building new support for student scholarships will be a significant part of UT Dallas’ future success. We rely on the generosity of individuals, corporations and foundations like those featured in this issue to achieve this goal.

The University of Texas at Dallas
A Gift for Tomorrow: Helping Students Realize Potential

Former Dean of Libraries

Larry Sall and his wife, Judy, have documented a planned gift that will create a scholarship aimed at opening doors and expanding opportunities for future students.

Dr. Larry Sall arrived at The University of Texas at Dallas in 1982, less than a decade after the University’s founding. Over the course of his 32-year career at UT Dallas, Larry and his wife, Judy, saw firsthand the difference the new University made in the lives of all those involved with the institution, from students and faculty to administrative employees.

In hopes of extending the benefits of a UT Dallas education to future generations, the couple recently documented a planned gift valued at one-third of their estate to create the Judy and Larry Sall Scholarship Fund. Their scholarship will support students graduating from the Dallas Independent School District, with a preference for first-generation college students and participants in the Academic Bridge Program, a University effort to prepare young students for college life and future careers through advising, mentoring and tutoring.

Sall recognized the incredible opportunities made available to him during his time at the University. While attending junior college in Portland, Oregon, Sall — already passionate about education — grew to admire a particular dean, but never envisioned that he could one-day hold that title. However, after serving as a coordinator of special collections and director of libraries at UT Dallas, Sall was named the University’s first dean of libraries in 2004.

“Dr. Sall is a transformational figure,” said Olajide. “He’s been a positive influence and has made a lasting difference.”

The couple knows that sometimes these students just need financial support to take a chance on their future careers. Sall said, “We just want to give them a shot.”

At the University, the Judy and Larry Sall Scholarship will support students who may not have benefited from the most well-resourced secondary schools, but who, nevertheless, have the talent and motivation to succeed in rigorous academic programs like those at UT Dallas.

“We’ve been very fortunate,” Judy Sall said. “This is a way of paying it forward. Somewhere along the line, we will make a difference to some student. Hopefully, many.”

Larry Sall’s own career expanded in a University effort to prepare young students for college life and future careers through advising, mentoring and tutoring.

“The Jonsson School has a vision for continuing to provide world-class education to engineering and computer science students,” Olajide said. “We look forward to the Axxess Scholars program playing an important role in that effort.”

Alumnus Energizes Esports with Gift To Name Arena

Axxess Endows Largest Computer Science Scholarship in UT Dallas History

Daniel Shen BS’10 grew up playing video games with his older brother, and gaming remained a significant part of his life while at The University of Texas at Dallas, when he competitively played World of Warcraft.

Now, Shen is supporting the burgeoning esports program at UT Dallas. His $100,000 gift named the new Sector 7 Energy UT Dallas Esports Gaming Arena, a facility in the Student Union where the esports teams train and play.

“The space is incredible,” Shen said. “I wanted to support the University where I had the opportunity to make a difference, and it was a natural choice for Axxess to provide the funding necessary to reward and help future computer science students at the University.”

Shen said he is proud that UT Dallas is at the forefront of the development of this industry. He hopes his first gift to the University will help propel the program’s expansion and the tens of achievements in league matches.

The 24-seat esports arena has four 80-inch TVs for match viewing, a cabaret for the coaches, innovation Gating PCs and custom chairs.

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Over the past half century, The University of Texas at Dallas has evolved from a lone building situated on a stretch of blackland prairie to a bustling campus brimming with bright students, innovative programs and cutting-edge research. Three individuals conceived the initial vision, but the ambitious evolution of UT Dallas was the result of many. For 50 years, generous supporters have provided critical contributions to fuel unprecedented growth and transformation.

1961
Hoping to create better higher-education opportunities and retain engineering and science talent in Texas, Eugene McDermott, Erik Jonsson and Ceci Green establish the Graduate Research Center of the Southwest, later known as the Southwest Center for Advanced Studies — the foundation for what will become The University of Texas at Dallas.

1969
Gov. Preston Smith signs HB 303, establishing a “state-supported institution of higher education to be known as The University of Texas at Dallas,” officially making UTD part of The University of Texas System. The University would be located on 325 acres of land donated to the state by the Southwest Center for Advanced Studies.

1976
Margaret McDermott donates a 10-foot-by-10-foot red, slate sculpture affectionately known across campus as the “Red Jack.”

1978
UT Dallas receives 275 acres of land donated by the Hoblitzelle Foundation and the Texas Research Institute for Mental Health. The land would be renamed the Margaret McDermott Blackland Prairie.

1989
At a special ceremony, Gov. Bill Clements signs HB 3022, establishing the University of Texas at Dallas as a four-year institution.

1990
Texas Instruments Chairman and CEO Jerry Jenkins leads The Campaign to Make History, an effort to raise $30 million to ensure the success of UT Dallas’ transition to a four-year university. Nearly 50 individuals, corporations and foundations contributed to the cause.

1992
The Excellence in Education Foundation contributes $6 million and nearly $5 million in endowed funds. Since 1992, Carl and Linda Green, Erik and Margaret Jonsson, and Eugene and Margaret McDermott used this foundation to contribute many millions of dollars and equivalent values in land acreage to UT Dallas.

1994
Dallas real estate developer Trammell Crow donates more than 100 live oak trees to the University to help landscape the acreage on either side of University Road.

2000
Margaret McDermott donates $32 million to establish the Eugene McDermott Scholars Program, a highly competitive program promoting students with leadership, cultural and educational tools to enrich their academic experiences. Because of McDermott’s generosity, UT Dallas scholars attend UT Dallas on full scholarship with a stipend package.

2004
Led by Texas Instruments, an economic development project known as Project Emrit pumps more than $300 million into the University to strengthen science and engineering programs.

2008
The Excellence in Education Foundation donates an additional $35 million to support academic and research programs, scholarships and faculty chairs, and campus enhancements. The five-year effort established a $75 million endowment funds to bolster the work of students and faculty and moved UTD closer to becoming a national research university.

2010
On Sept. 1, 2009, just two months after Texas law made the University eligible for Texas Research Incentive Program matching funds, 86 donors make gifts totaling nearly $7 million — seven of which are $1 million or more — the largest number of seven-figure donations ever received in a single day at UTD.

2013
Dedicated supporters of the Callier Center for Communicative Disorders contribute $1 million to launch a $22 million expansion on the Richardson campus.

2014
A $74.6 million gift from Margaret McDermott, combined with $16 million in TRIP funding, creates the Eugene McDermott Graduate Fellows Program, an innovative program designed to prepare outstanding doctoral students for careers in leading research enterprises.

2015
The Excellence in Education Foundation raises $273.3 million to support academic and research programs, scholarships and faculty chairs, and campus enhancements. The five-year effort established an additional $75 million endowment funds to bolster the work of students and faculty and moved UTD closer to becoming a national research university. Texas Research Incentive Program (TRIP) and The University of Texas System Research Incentive Program (UTRIP) matching funds account for $67 million.

2018
North Texas real estate icon Herb Wilmot and his wife, Donna, establish the Herbert D. Wilmot Institute for Real Estate with their $3 million gift to support programs in the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

2019
The entire collection of the Trammell and Margaret Crow Museum of Asian Art, together with $23 million of support funding, is donated to The University of Texas at Dallas by the Crow family to create the Trammell and Margaret Crow Museum of Asian Art at The University of Texas at Dallas.
Northwood Woman’s Club Establishes Endowment for Patient Care at Callier

In celebration of its 50th anniversary, Northwood Woman’s Club (NWC) established the Northwood Woman’s Club Patient Care Endowment Fund with a gift of $250,000 to The University of Texas at Dallas’ Callier Center for Communication Disorders. The endowment will provide access to clinical services for patients of all ages with speech, language and hearing disorders who otherwise would be unable to afford their care.

“The endowment is a tribute to the nine women who founded NWC 50 years ago and to the members who have held true to NWC’s mission for 50 years,” said Vaughn Gross, NWC 2018-19 president. “We wanted to do something significant that will live beyond us into the next 50 years.”

A women’s civic organization that makes a difference in people’s lives.

Edward M. Ackerman

“[Ed’s] favorite question to us, posed at every milestone the center achieved, was ‘what do we do next?’ Today, the center is and always will be a powerful testimony to his generosity and wisdom.”

— Dr. Nils Roemer, Stan and Barbara Rabin Professor of Holocaust Studies, Director of the Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies and Interim Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities

Jennifer and Peter Roberts

“The ability to strengthen and lengthen brain capacity is something we all want. Progress in this one area would be a tremendous game-changer for our families, institutions and nation.”

— Peter Roberts

In celebration of their 50th year of providing care at Callier Center, Jennifer and Peter Roberts recently contributed $1 million toward the Center’s BrainHealth Fund, a groundbreaking multiyear research collaboration of scientists around the globe working to unlock the brain’s potential. The couple also created and endowed the Jennifer and Peter Roberts Distinguished New Scientist award to support the independent studies of the center’s early career researchers, and have backed the Brain Health Institute and the center’s Adolescent Reasoning Initiative.

Margaret McDermott

“I believe that our founders would be proud of the University that they envisioned and, for years, Margaret McDermott has been a driving force in fulfilling that vision. She was the brilliant and benevolent philanthropist who challenged us to continuously reach new heights of success.”

— Dr. Richard C. Benes, UT Dallas President

James Carter

“In many ways, Dr. Carter’s professional life is completely intertwined with the history of UT Dallas. He invested so much of his time, energy and talent into the University, and we are better for it. He was a generous colleague and professor who never lost his passion for sparking interest in science within the UT Dallas community and beyond.”

— Dr. Inga Musselman, UT Dallas Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

SAVE THE DATE
April 22 & 23, 2020
#COMETogetherUTD
givingday.utdallas.edu
Biomedical Researcher Earns Major Grant from Rita Allen Foundation

Dr. Michael Burton, an assistant professor in the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences at UT Dallas, has been named a 2019 Rita Allen Foundation Scholar. This award will provide $150,000 in funding over three years to support Burton’s research into the biology of pain.

“The Rita Allen Foundation Scholars are a remarkable group of early career researchers,” said Elizabeth Good Christopherson, president and CEO of the Rita Allen Foundation. “Michael Burton was selected this year through a highly competitive process, and we warmly welcomed him at our annual symposium this summer. Michael and others in the 2019 cohort of Rita Allen Foundation Scholars exemplify the spirit of the award — driven by seeking innovative approaches to open new frontiers in immunology, cancer, neuroscience and the crucial, complex problem of chronic pain.”

Now the principal investigator for the University’s Neuroimmunology and Behavior Lab, Burton investigates the interconnectivity of the immune and nervous systems, exploring their interplay to better understand the mechanisms involved in pain plasticity. His lab has three areas of focus: inflammation, aging and cannabinoid signaling.

“The Rita Allen Foundation Scholars are a remarkable group of early career researchers,” said Elizabeth Good Christopherson, president and CEO of the Rita Allen Foundation. “We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Michael Burton to our fold and to support his research into the biology of pain.”

The foundation grant provides both vital funding and distinguished recognition for this important research. Preeminent scholars have established themselves as fundamental contributors in their fields, winning prestigious awards such as the Nobel Prize and National Medal of Science. Burton, who also earned the 2019 Mitchell-McCaw Award for Research Excellence from the National Institutes of Health Pain Consortium, understands the significance of this award.

“To receive the 2019 Rita Allen Foundation Award in pain is an overwhelming honor,” Burton said. “It means that my ideas in understanding cellular mechanisms in cannabinoid signaling are robust and represent a clear need in project development and understanding in the field. This project serves to help resolve some debate about several aspects of cannabinoid signaling and, with the support of the Rita Allen Foundation Award, begins to lay important groundwork for future related projects in my lab.”

The University of Texas at Dallas honored 12 faculty members during the spring Investiture Ceremony. Dr. Özalp Özer (left), the first Mike Brodie Distinguished Professor in Management, celebrated at the reception with the Brodies.

At the 2019 Celebration of Support in October, Heritage Tower in downtown Dallas was illuminated to commemorate the University’s 50th anniversary.

To Blidarse (third from left), assistant vice president for external affairs at AT&T Inc. and UT Dallas Executive Board member, presented a $25,000 check from the AT&T Foundation to support UT Dallas’ Academic Bridge and Future Comets programs. Pictured (from left) Christine Blidarse, Dr. Mike Brodie and Kyle Edgington PhD’13, vice president for development and alumni relations.

The University of Texas at Dallas honored 12 faculty members during the University’s annual Alumni Day of Service. Alumni and friends volunteered at the North Texas Food Bank during the University’s annual Alumni Day of Service.

University Neighbors Make Planned Gift to Support Transfer Students

When Peggy and John Marlowe moved to Richardson over 35 years ago, The University of Texas at Dallas was just a few buildings among empty fields — hardly the bustling campus it is today. At the time, UT Dallas had yet to admit its first classes of freshmen and sophomores. Primarily a graduate school, any undergraduates who enrolled at UT Dallas were transferring from other colleges.

As the years passed, the Marlowes watched UT Dallas grow in their own backyard and begin to feel a connection between the University’s history and their own experiences in higher education.

Attending college was not an immediate possibility for Peggy when she graduated from high school. After 15 years of secretarial work, Peggy began commuting to UT Tyler, where she eventually earned her teaching certification. She would later earn a master’s degree at Texas Women’s University in preparation for work as an educational diagnostician.

John grew up in Tyler; the youngest of three children raised by a single mother.

“We were not poor, but not far from it,” John said. “My mother worked, and I worked from the time I was 12. I knew college wasn’t an option for me without working.”

John supported himself through two years at Tyler Junior College before transferring to Baylor University. Between his personal income and the school’s financial aid, John was able to finish his degree.

The couple saw their own experiences reflected in the lives of the students Peggy taught in Richard Russell College’s teacher preparation program.

“I saw students who were barely able to afford community college,” Peggy said. “I saw students who were left behind. I could see the stress they were under. I knew that a college education meant everything they had to pursue their educations. But they also understood that balancing work and school can have a detrimental effect on student outcomes.

“You can’t do both,” John said. “You can’t have the full college experience and also work. If there’s a way to make that situation more manageable for other people, we would like to be a part of that.”

Peggy and John found a way to help similar students when they began planning for their estate. The couple has made a gift via their will to endow the John and Peggy Marlowe Scholarship. Their gift will support students transferring to UT Dallas from community colleges who aspire to teaching careers.

“We’re a neighborhood,” Peggy said. “Watching UT Dallas grow has been like watching one of your kids grow.”

The couple appreciates the opportunities that UT Dallas makes available for local students to better themselves through world-class academic programs. In Fall 2018, almost 2,000 transfer students enrolled at the University.

“There are so many exciting things happening at UT,” John said. “Why wouldn’t you want to go there if you could?”

Learn more at uofdallas.org.

John and Peggy Marlowe, UT Dallas’ neighbors for over 35 years, are using a planned gift to create a scholarship for transfer students.

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“At UT Dallas, if you have the merit, you will have an opportunity. I can get into a research lab on my own qualifications. Along with the scholarship funding and the community in the Hobson Wildenthal Honors College, there are so many opportunities for me. What other university does that?”

— Matilda Ho
Mechanical Engineering Senior and National Merit Scholar