

Southwestern Health Resources



Southwestern Health Resources selects Dr. Bradley Lega as Clinical Scholars grant recipient (video)

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Grant will further studies combating memory loss in epilepsy, degenerative brain disease

DALLAS – January 9, 2017 – Southwestern Health Resources has selected neurosurgeon [Dr. Bradley Lega](#) as the inaugural grant recipient for its [Texas Health Resources Clinical Scholars Program](#) to further his research into improving the memory of those with epilepsy and other degenerative brain diseases (see video). The program stems from the creation last year of the Southwestern Health Resources health care network by UT Southwestern Medical Center and Texas Health Resources.



Dr. Lega, Assistant Professor of Neurological Surgery, Neurology and Neurotherapeutics, and Psychiatry at UT Southwestern Medical Center, will receive a total of \$690,000 in funding over three years to strengthen and broaden the care provided to thousands of Dallas-area epilepsy patients.

“Memory loss is a primary symptom of epilepsy, and my research examines direct recordings from patients implanted with seizure-localization tools to develop strategies that can improve memory,” Dr. Lega said. “In the future, we hope to use this data to also help individuals who suffer cognitive impairment caused by other conditions such as traumatic brain injury, a severe population health issue affecting millions of Texans each year.”

Data collection has already begun for 40 participants who were designated from both UT Southwestern and Texas Health Resources epilepsy surgery programs. Dr. Lega and his team hope to enroll more participants in the coming months.

“I’ve already had the opportunity to start working with the great physicians and support staff at Texas Health, and I hope that my efforts in this program will further cement what is a promising relationship between our institutions,” he said.

Southwestern Health Resources, an integrated health care network formed by Texas Health Resources and UT Southwestern, established the Texas Health Resources Clinical Scholars Program to facilitate the advancement and recruitment of outstanding clinician researchers. Leaders at both institutions expect the cumulative work of the Clinical Scholars Program to help advance the effectiveness of UTSW and Texas Health clinical research programs, increase the impact of the Southwestern Health Resources Population Health Research Center on the North Texas community, and enhance the delivery of quality health care.

“The Texas Health Clinical Scholars program adds a new dimension to research capabilities in North Texas,” said [Elizabeth Ransom, M.D., FACS](#), executive vice president and North Zone clinical leader for Texas Health. “It capitalizes on the unique strengths of UT Southwestern’s world class research infrastructure and Texas Health Resources’ excellence in clinical quality.”

[Dr. Charles Ginsburg](#), who chairs the Texas Health Resources Clinical Scholars Program Committee that selected Dr. Lega, noted he is one of the few neurosurgeons in the country who uses stereoelectroencephalography, or stereo EEG, to locate the origin of epileptic seizures and determine if a patient is a candidate for surgery. Less invasive than the traditional approach, stereo EEG involves electrodes placed in the brain that record electrical activity during seizures.

“Dr. Lega is a superbly-trained neurosurgeon with specialized training in epilepsy surgery, and has surgical skills that are unique in this area of the country,” said Dr. Ginsburg, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Administration and Professor of Pediatrics at UT Southwestern. “Specifically, he has the ability to place very small electrodes in specific areas of the brain while he is performing surgery on patients with epilepsy. The probes serve as tools to allow him to record electrical activity from highly targeted areas of the brain that is then converted and transmitted to specialized computers for storage and analysis. This analysis of the electrical data provides him and his colleagues a microscopic view of the brain’s electrical responses, particularly the memory processes that are the focus of his research.”

The National Association of Epilepsy Centers, which evaluates medical facilities regionally, nationally, and internationally, has designated UT Southwestern a Level 4 epilepsy center, the highest designation possible. Physicians, researchers, and clinical care leaders at the center offer the most advanced diagnostic techniques and treatments for epilepsy, the fourth most common neurological problem. Only migraine, stroke and Alzheimer’s disease occurs more frequently, according to data from the Epilepsy Foundation.

<https://www.southwesternhealth.com/2017/01/09/southwestern-health-resources-selects-neurosurgeon-inaugural-texas-health-resources-clinical-scholars-grant/>