

WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER!

President's Letters

Wow. I sit here in disbelief as I reflect on what's happening in the world right now. A pandemic. COVID-19. Who would have believed that during the Forum's 50th anniversary year we'd be hunkered down at home rather than celebrating this milestone year by honoring our founders at our 50th anniversary reception, sipping champagne at our Starry Night 50th Anniversary Gala, and reuniting our leaders at the 50th anniversary Past President Luncheon? Pause. Breathe. Reset.

If you think about it... it's nothing short of amazing that 50 years ago **Tena Gorman**, **Ruth Eileen Sullivan**, and **Dottie Block** had the vision to launch Southwest Research Forum, today known as the Texas Biomedical Forum. How incredible is it that this year our mission is clearer than ever? There is nothing better than standing behind Texas Biomed in this moment in time.

I've learned some life lessons this year with regards to leadership. I might be president, but my role means nothing without the support of the board. We went through some unprecedented times this year and I leaned on every single one of you—especially the Executive Board—**Cynthia**, **Whitney, Karen, Amelita, Brooke, Audra, Emily, Emilie, Whitney**, and **Jody**.

Throughout this process, there were essential life lessons that were further instilled into my heart and mind over the last year:

*Always give (and receive) grace.

*We're stronger together.

*Seek wise counsel. Thank you to my advisors: **Terry Gouger, Laura Moorman**, and **Courtney Percy**, as well as my honorary advisors: **Corbett Christie**, **Tena Gorman**, **Leslie Hamilton**, **Karen Mueller**, and **Judy Schlesinger**.

*My family is my everything. Thank you **Ben Swaney** for all the back porch conversations. Thank you to my mom, **Dotty Vogt**, for the daily encouragement phone calls. (They didn't sign up for Forum, but I sure know they felt like they did!) *Own your mistakes and say you're sorry when you need to we are all human.

*Say "thank you" sincerely and often. I will be saying thank you to my board and advisors the rest of my life!

*Lastly, pray before you act and trust God, even if things don't unfold in the way you thought they would.

The Forum's 50th Anniversary Starry Night gala was supposed to take place on May 2, 2020. Chair **Whitney Schones** and Co-Chair **Karen Bryant** put their heart and energy into planning the event. Thank you for the 10 months of living and breathing this event. Thank you for working so hard for the Forum and Texas Biomed. Thank you for putting our donors at the forefront of your minds in all of your decisions. And lastly, thank you for understanding the incredibly difficult decision to cancel.

And their team (oh, what a team!) Jessica Worth (Gala Assistant), the Kickoff party was a huge success thanks to you. Audra Kerr (Treasurer), with the cancellation of the Gala, your job turned into much more than expected and yet you were always willing to do more. Thank you. Bonnie **Muecke** (Table Sales), your kindness and smile makes everyone feel at home. Corinna Richter (Gala Grants), your determination and followthrough contributed greatly to our record-breaking year for the Forum! And to the rest of the Gala Committee - each of you worked so hard, and we are incredibly grateful for your persistence and dedication. Not to mention our wonderful donors - Coates and Kelso Foundation, Techwerks/Fravell Family, Schlagel Family, and Valero just to name a few... this year wouldn't have been nearly as successful if it weren't for each and every one of you. We're in awe of you and your generosity - you are stars in our eyes.

In February, **Gloria Dilley** and **Triana Grossman** chaired the final Cheers for Chairity event. The Dilley family opened up their beautiful home and we had designers from from all over Texas and even a few from outside the state including Past President **Melissa Morgan**, past Gala Chair **Raven Labatt** and current Gala Chair **Whitney Schones**. This event raised over \$15,000 dollars. Also in February, past president **Jody Lutz** led our nominating committee to slate the new future leaders of the Forum. This is one of the most important positions to take on so thank you, Jody, and the nominating committee for taking this job so seriously. I know the Forum is just going to continue to grow stronger and better.

In March, **Cynthia Kerby** and **Kristin Tips** put together our spring lecture luncheon event which we had a fascinating panel of speakers - **Suzanne Dabbous**, **M.D.** (Past President), **Jean Patterson**, **Ph.D**, and **Angelica M. Olmo-Fontanez**, **M.S.** In this luncheon, we also included our Science Education Awards ceremony, which was lead by **Christina Ketabachi** and **Lindsay Bolner**. In the ceremony, we honored several high school science teachers. We're very grateful to **Valerie Guenther** for her ongoing support of the Forum and her continued leadership around the Science Education Awards.

The Argyle so graciously offered to throw us a 50th anniversary reception on March 16th; unfortunately, that was just at the beginning of our fight against COVID-19, so we were forced to cancel. We were going to honor our founders, past presidents and gala chairs that night; instead, we've rescheduled that for December 4th. I do need to thank **Tena Gorman** and **Barbara Dreeben** for helping me with this event. It's been a true honor to get to know you better this year. You are both women I have always looked up to and now absolutely adore.

Our newsletter team, **Katie Rogers** and **Angela Rabke**, are working hard right now to get this newsletter out. The talent these two brought to the table this year is astounding. Thank you for making us look so good!

I'd also like to add a little shout-out to **Meredith Howard** and **Katie Rogers**. In the midst of these unchartered territories, these two selflessly showed up and offered

"I don't believe in failure, only outcome. When there is disappointment, I never think it is the end of the story, but the beginning of something new, sometimes a great adventure."

-Tom Slick



to help... whether the project involved writing a beautiful letter or formatting an article, everything you put out looks amazing. You're true team players. Thank you for going outside your job descriptions this year to help.

On May 6th, over a Zoom board meeting, I virtually handed over the gavel to **Cynthia Kerby**, who will serve as Forum President for 2020 – 2021. I'm grateful to have worked alongside Cynthia this year—especially at the end. I love how God gives us all different gifts; I know Cynthia and her team will take this board to another level.

Lastly, I would like to thank our leader **Dr. Larry Schlesinger** and the scientists at Texas Biomed for making the world better one research at a time—saving lives along the way.

The Forum is closing this year with a gift of over \$800,000 to Texas Biomed. I'm overcome with emotion, with gratitude. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I'm in awe of all of you and the part you played in this year's success. It has been a true honor to have served as the 50th President for Texas Biomedical Forum.

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Amy Swaney 2019 – 2020 Forum President





FORUM GALA 2020—THE CELEBRATION OF 50 YEARS

When our planning for the 2020 Forum Gala began, little did we know the significance this year would have on the Texas Biomedical Forum and the Institute. Our focus and energy initially started with creating an event to honor 50 years of The Forum and 50 years of Gala. With the leadership of Gala Chair Whitney Schones, Gala Co-Chair Karen Bryant, and Gala Assistant Jessica Worth, the planning began and the theme A Starry Night was revealed at the beautiful home of Kim Lewis.

"A Starry Night" held significance as the stars symbolized the pioneering discoveries taking place at the Texas Biomedical Institute. Both art and science go into the groundbreaking research the scientists at the Institute create, and there was no better way to depict this story than through Van Gogh's "A Starry Night!"

The Gala committee experienced many historic milestones this year. In support of the 50 years, the gala team set out to honor the women of the Forum who had the vision for this notable organization many years ago, with the support of the James W. Gorman Family Foundation, the Mays Family Foundation and the Sullivan Family Foundation , the team secured three challenge matches through the gala grant program. A big thank you to Amy Swaney and Corinna Richter for their tireless efforts in creating this robust program and securing the initial grant donations to meet the matches from the three foundations.

Thank you to Bonnie Muecke, Table Sales Chair and Audra Kerr, Gala Treasurer for their contributions this year and selling out all premier rooms and tables early in 2019. This milestone allowed us to secure funds early and create a masterpiece for the evening. Thank you also to our 50th anniversary sponsor, TechWerks/The Fravell Family, and our premier room sponsors, Valero, Coats and Kelso Foundation, Christus Health, Dr. John & Lisa Evans, Feik



Forum in Focus / Spring 2020

Family Foundation, Corinna & JB Richter and Stacy & David Schlagel.

The support from our community was evident early on with the commitments received from past, current and new Texas Biomed supporters. We are so appreciative to all of the gala grant and table sales donors, as well as local businesses who committed to in-kind and underwriting support, especially our 50th Anniversary Donors: Cavender Auto Group, Julian Gold, Kelly Wade Jewelers, and Lee Michaels Fine Jewelry. We especially want to thank Lauren Pepping, Silent Auction Chair and Christina Ketabchi, cochair along with Kristin Tips and Mary Labatt, Underwriting Chairs for all of their hard work.

With only loose ends to tie up in the last months prior to Gala, we began to recognize that the Forum and the Institute had a bigger role to play in our community and in the world of biomedical research. The global pandemic brought to the forefront the impact of infectious disease; specifically novel viruses. The search for a clinical intervention to stop the spread or mitigate the harm from the virus was, and still is, top of mind for everyone and the role Texas Biomedical Institute plays in this fight is now clearer more than ever.

It is evident the connection between the women of the Texas Biomedical Forum and the staff of the Texas Biomedical Institute is stronger during this trying time, and The Forum is proud to play a part in furthering the Institute's scientific pursuits.

Although the 50th Anniversary Gala of 2020 took a different path, our hope is that we all remain mindful of the mission of the Texas Biomedical Forum—to support the Texas Biomedical Research Institute through community relations, volunteer services and fundraising. We thank you all for your tremendous support of our mission and the ability for the Forum to give a historical contribution to Texas Biomedical Institute in the Forum's 50th year. The Institute's mission is our hope for a brighter tomorrow.



Great things are done by a series of small things brought together.

-Van Gogh.



TEXAS BIOMED ESTABLISHED TEAM TO STUDY SARS-COV-2 AND ACCELERATED NOVEL STUDIES TO COMBAT COVID-19

Scientists at Texas Biomedical Research Institute (Texas Biomed) began work on the novel coronavirus known as SARS-CoV-2 in February 2020. A team consisting of leading virologists, microbiologists, high containment lab experts and animal modeling researchers are proposing several research projects to 1) establish a nonhuman primate (monkey) model to study the pathogenesis and transmission as well as develop countermeasures; 2) test detection methods, including a project involving optofluidic chips, which screens specimens for the virus and determine stage; and 3) partner with other local and national scientists and clinicians on projects to identify potential therapies and vaccines for the virus.

Scientists at Texas Biomed launched a comprehensive research initiative to investigate multiple animal species and their response to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The research, which is expected to be complete in early May, will allow scientists to pinpoint the best animal model to move diagnostics, vaccines, and therapies forward that will combat COVID-19. Animal studies support research on the pathogenesis and transmission, as well as the development of countermeasures, against SARS-CoV-2. Five species have been included in the study: baboons, macaques, marmosets, mice and guinea pigs.

"As the leading independent, non-profit biomedical research organization in the country focused on eradicating infectious disease threats in the world, we believe it is our duty and responsibility to help find the necessary animal model to treat COVID-19," said Dr. Larry Schlesinger, Professor, President and CEO of Texas Biomed. "In the interest of saving human lives, research on multiple species provides us a greater understanding of disease pathology and progression and gives us a better probability of finding the best model. However, science is often slowed by red tape. I am proud that Texas Biomed is agile, nimble and quick-to-action as an independent institution. This flexibility allowed us to prioritize regulatory and approval processes, and with the help of our funding partners, start the research faster."

In the span of two weeks, the Texas Biomed secured all required regulatory approvals, grew and cultured the virus and moved animals into the Biosafety level (BSL)-3 and BSL-4 labs to begin work. Texas Biomed and the Southwest National Primate Research Center (SNPRC) on its campus have experience and success in creating animal models for diseases, such as Ebola, HIV, tuberculosis, Hepatitis-C and Zika, and experience evaluating candidate therapeutics and vaccines for a number of virus threats including SARS. Texas Biomed virologist and Professor Jean Patterson, Ph.D. will lead a pilot project with collaborators nationally on a possible detection method for the virus.

"We're using expertise as well as the technology and processes we developed through SARS, Zika and even the Ebola outbreaks and applying them to the coronavirus," Dr. Patterson said. "The need to study this virus is heightened because of the rapidity of infection."

According to Dr. Patterson, SARS-CoV-2 is 80% identical to SARS, which is a high comparison due to SARS-CoV-2 being a novel virus. It's also ten times more infectious than its predecessor even though it has about a 2% mortality rate.

The expertise developed through past research has been combined with the development and implementation of reverse genetics approaches to generate recombinant SARS-CoV-2 to facilitate the study of the virus in vitro (culture) and in vivo (living organism) in order to develop novel therapeutics and vaccine candidates. And, expertise in primate clinical biology, imaging and immunology technologies is being applied to ensure a comprehensive evaluation and understanding of the disease's causes and effects.

"To move a new drug or vaccine to market, biopharmaceutical companies must ensure that the intervention works and is safe for human use," explains Dr. Schlesinger. "The FDA requires that these safety and efficacy studies be performed in animals whenever possible before researchers can ethically move on to humans. Nonhuman primates are the most closely relevant models of human disease while other animal models are helpful in understanding infection and pathology of the disease, as well as the immune response."

Beyond safety and efficacy research, animal models provide researchers significant information about how the virus causes disease – how it enters cells, how it replicates, how it attacks other cells. This information allows scientists to develop drugs targeting these various processes.



Animal studies also provide information on how the human body responds to the virus. Humans and nonhuman primates share 97-99% genetic similarity. Understanding how one animal's immune system protects against the disease while another's does not helps scientists discover ways to boost immunity.

Several vaccine and antiviral candidates for COVID-19 are currently being discovered, including some undergoing phase 1 human trials, aiming to determine if the intervention is safe. Further testing and refinement of drug candidates will be required as studies progress to Phase 2 and 3.

"Just because we have one drug candidate, we don't stop looking for other ways to stop a virus," said Dr. Deepak Kaushal, Professor, Director of the SNPRC and one of the principal investigators of the Texas Biomed study. "A vaccine is 12-18 months out at a minimum, and while antivirals could come sooner, they will need to undergo testing to ensure they work and are safe for humans. A validated NHP model of COVID-19 disease will significantly hasten these vaccine/ therapeutic development activities. With this study, we are positioned to partner with companies and researchers to accelerate the development and approval of therapies and vaccines."

The Texas Biomed scientific team is supporting nearly a dozen COVID-19 projects internally and externally and has begun developing a pipeline of studies with collaborators and business partners worldwide.

"Texas Biomed is the only private research organization with both BSL3 and BSL4 facilities along with maintaining multiple colonies of non-human primate species and other animals capable of providing such a comprehensive study in such a short turnaround time," Schlesinger adds. "We mobilized a tremendous base of supporters to raise more than \$3 million toward the completion of this study. This is an excellent example of the power of public/private partnerships to move scientific discovery and ultimately healthcare forward."

Texas Biomed recently built a new 7,500 sq. ft. BSL-3 laboratory, which is the minimum requirement by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) to begin research on this new virus. Member of the Texas Biomed Coronavirus Pilot Project include Professors Luis Giavedoni, Ph.D., Jean Patterson, Ph.D., Ricardo Carrion, Ph.D., who is Director of Contract Research for the BSL-4 laboratory and an expert on developing animal models; Professor Luis Martinez-Sobrido, Ph.D., a virologist with expertise in virus development; Professor Deepak Kaushal, Ph.D., who is the Director of the SNPRC; Professor Jordi B. Torrelles, Ph.D., a microbiologist/ cell biologist and Director of the BSL-3 laboratory.

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CHARLES BUTT FOUNDATION AWARDS \$50,000 FOR NEW K-12 EDUCATION INITIATIVE AT TEXAS BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Texas Biomedical Research Institute is excited to announce that it is partnering with The Charles Butt Foundation to establish a visionary educational program targeting K-12 students in our community to provide one-of-a-kind opportunities for the next generation of scientists and the future STEM workforce of the region. This K-12 initiative, titled the Discovery and Learning Initiative, will serve a vital education and economic development role as it will focus on building the life science workforce needed through education and cultivation of talent. The Charles Butt Foundation, under the leadership of new Forum board member Kate Rogers, will generously provide \$150,000 in seed money over the next three years to establish the Discovery and Learning Initiative. These funds will enable Texas Biomed to create state of the art curricula tailored to the needs of our local K-12 community, establish an online portal for the community to access resources, establish a marketing plan to ensure effective dissemination and recruit an expert team of education and outreach professionals to execute and monitor program objectives.

There is a critical gap in STEM education and workforce development. Students and schools, primarily those serving populations underrepresented in STEM careers, are in need of innovative programs designed to increase student knowledge of career opportunities in STEM. In order to fill this gap, Texas Biomed's Discovery and Learning Initiative aims to excite and motivate students at the K-12 level to pursue higher education and encourage them to consider STEM careers.

The Charles Butt Foundation's investment in these programs directly supports the efforts to improve education, establish San Antonio as a hub for innovation and become a national leader in the life sciences industry. Texas Biomed anticipates that, with the creation of the Discovery and Learning Initiative, they can double the number of students reached in the next 3 years to 7,000 and increase the breadth and depth of available curricula for teachers. As an industry leader, Texas Biomed, along with the visionary Charles Butt Foundation, has the capacity and capability to serve as partners in the education of our youth, to create an exceptional environment for the growth and success of science in our future.

26th ANNUAL SCIENCE EDUCATION AWARDS & SPRING LECTURE LUNCHEON

Wednesday, March 4, 2020, the Texas Biomedical Forum presented in partnership with the V.H. McNutt Memorial Foundation, the 26th annual Science Education Awards to three local high school science teachers at the Spring Lecture Luncheon at The Argyle.

Twenty-six years ago, the Science Education Awards program was conceived and founded by Jerilyn Blanchard, Past Forum President, and Valerie Guenther, Forum member and Trustee. Together they established a partnership with the Texas Biomedical Forum and the V.H. McNutt Memorial Foundation, led by Mrs. Valerie Guenther, to jointly award up to \$20,000.00 to local high school science teachers, both public and private, in Bexar County and surrounding areas. The goal of the program is to assist in the purchase of teaching materials to provide hands-on, progressive science education programs.

A panel of judges met to review the applications and determine the winners. The judges this year included Mrs. Valerie Guenther, Forum member and Trustee, representing the V.H. McNutt Memorial Foundation; Lindsey Bolner and Christina Ketabchi, representing the Texas Biomedical Forum; and three scientists from Texas Biomedical Research Institute who included Dr. Kendra Alfson, Dr. Raul Bastarrachea, and Dr. Christopher Chen.

This year we honored the following three high school science teachers for their proposals:

Jennifer Rice, John Marshall High School "Every Contact Leaves a Trace: Microscopic Analysis of Trace Evidence in Forensic Science"



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Susan Barber, New Braunfels High School "Using Real Time Technology to Evaluate Physics Principles"

Dr. Jamie Holbrook, Saint Mary's Hall "In Vitro Rearing and Risk Assessment of Homey Bees (Apis Mellifera) Following Exposure to Agriculture Pesticides"

Following the awards ceremony, First Vice President, Cynthia Kerby introduced Larry S. Schlesinger, M.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of Texas Biomedical Research Institute to share a few words and provide information regarding the COLVID-19 pandemic.

The Luncheon topic was "Routes of Success: From Early to Established Careers, Women discuss pathways in STEM". Our panel of speakers consisted of:

- Suzanne Dabbous, M.D., Avestee Women's Imaging Center, Founder, Board Certified Radiologist
- Jean Patterson, Ph.D., Texas Biom, edical Research Institute, Professor, Chair of BSL-4 Task Force
- Angelica M. Olmo-Fontanez, M.S., Texas Biomedical Research Institute and UTHSA Graduate Student/ Biomedical Researcher
- Moderated by Lisa Cruz, Texas Biomed's AVP of Corporate Communication

Applications for the 2020-2021 Science Education Awards will be available this summer on the Forum's website under the Community Outreach link.

The three winners will share a total of \$11,000 in awards. Congratulations to this year's winners!

Membership Matters



THANK YOU, ALL!

We are proud to report that Forum members raised \$42,500 through membership dues during the 2019-2020 year - funds that will directly benefit Texas Biomedical Research Institute.

We hope everyone enjoys a healthy and happy summer. Be on the lookout for membership renewal reminders, as our 2020-2021 membership year kicked off on June 1.

We look forward to the return of events and other social gatherings. In the meantime, amidst the current COVID-19 pandemic, it's essential we continue to bolster our membership and support the researchers at Texas Biomed. You may sign up or renew with a 100% tax-deductible donation at https://forum.txbiomed.org/forum-membership/ or mail a check to:

Texas Biomedical Forum Attention: Membership P.O. Box 6648 San Antonio, Texas 78209

There are three levels of Forum membership: Benefactor Membership: \$300.00 | Supporter Membership: \$150.00 | Contributor Membership: \$75.00

All members receive the same benefits. The higher-level memberships allow the Forum to increase our visibility in the community and provide greater financial support of Texas Biomed. Please email Forum.Membership@TexasBioMed.org with any guestions. As always, thank you for your generosity and support.



PAST PRESIDENT'S LETTER

"Each moment in history is a fleeting time, precious and unique. But some stand out as moments of beginning, in which courses are set that shape decades or centuries." - Richard Nixon, Inaugural Address Jan. 20, 1969

Suffice to say we are in the midst of one of those moments. It is with heartfelt gratitude that we thank those on the front lines and those that have chosen to stay home, those at HEB insuring we are fed and our friends at local banks insuring businesses big and small stay operating, our city workers, and the millions of unsung heroes who are playing new and unprecedented roles. It is with gusto that we celebrate the scientists we are lucky enough to call friends and neighbors at Texas Biomed. In these times of uncertainty may we use this spirit of gratitude as a catalyst for happiness and hope.

This is not the May we at the Forum had in our grand plans. But it does bring us back full circle to our core mission to support Texas Biomedical Research Institute through community relations, volunteer services and fundraising. As my time on the board draws to a close, I am forever grateful for the opportunity to serve. I remain, like our other esteemed past presidents, steadfast in my commitment to Texas Biomed and their ongoing role in providing a better, safer world for not only the here and now but for generations to come. How humbling to have the privilege of playing a very small part in that story - which is exactly what each and every Forum member does. In this together, as we always have been - and by working together the best is truly yet to come. Cheers to the Forum.

2019 – 2020 TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT





Lindsay Bolner

Lindsay has a background in advertising and PR, with a strong focus in hospitality, food and bevcerage and the tech industry having worked with clients like the American Heart Association, Central Market, Warner Brothers & Hotel Valencia. Lindsay was born & raised in San Antonio. She graduated from Saint Mary's Hall and went on to earn her BA in Economics Management from Ohio Wesleyan. In addition to her Texas BioMed Forum Board member position, she also serves on the Board for Brighton Center. Lindsay is involved in the community, serving organizations such as the DoSeum. Witte Museum, Ballet San Antonio & Saint Mary's Hall. Lindsay is married to Greg Bolner and together they have two children, Emerson and Hunter.

Bonnie Muecke

Bonnie was born and raised in Houston and received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish with a minor in Education from the University of Texas at Austin. Bonnie taught middle school Spanish at Saint Mary's Hall until her oldest child was born. She and her husband Mark have three young children. Lillie (8) and twins Walt and Olivia (6). Bonnie is an active volunteer in the community and is a past co-chair of Kappa Kappa Gamma Tablescapes. She also enjoys devoting much of her time volunteering in her children's schools. Bonnie is honored and excited to be serving the Texas Biomedical Forum alongside a wonderful group of women.



In service and with gratitude, Jody Lutz



Gloria Dilley

Gloria Steves Dilley was born and raised in San Antonio. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree from Sweet Briar College and a Master of Business Administration from The University of Incarnate Word. Gloria is currently Vice President and sixth-generation owner of Steves and Sons Door Company. When not working for her family company, she devotes her free time to Texas Biomed Research Institute, the University of Incarnate Word as a Development Board Member, Confrerie des Chevaliers du Tastevin, World Affairs Council, the Mind Science Foundation, and the Witte, Gloria's greatest pleasure is spending time with her husband, Miguel Evan Dilley and her son, Edward Galt Steves Dilley.



Texas Biomedical Forum Post Office Box 6648 San Antonio, TX 78209

THANK YOU TO OUR 2019-2020 GALA DONORS!

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