

The University of Texas at San Antonio



Gifts for a Cure

The Semmes Foundation Supports Alzheimer's Research at UTSA



Tom and Pat Semmes, two trustees of the Semmes Foundation, are honored to support research that may lead to a cure for Alzheimer's Disease.

The Semmes Foundation is committed to helping researchers study and ultimately find ways to prevent Alzheimer's disease. In 2013, the foundation leveraged a matching gift opportunity to establish an endowed position at UTSA to support the work of renowned Alzheimer's expert, Dr. George Perry. The editor of the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*, Dr. Perry is one of the world's most cited researchers of the disease.

In 2014, after first-hand observation of Dr. Perry's work, the Semmes Foundation invested in such research once again by elevating the endowment. This latest gift is now providing an even greater perpetual source of funding through the Semmes Foundation Endowed Distinguished Chair in Neurobiology.

"We are pleased with the progress Dr. Perry is making with his research. With the strides being made toward finding answers and potentially a cure, we wanted to increase the impact of our support," says Tom Semmes, president of the Semmes Foundation.

The trustees' latest gift of \$500,000 brings the total endowment for supporting Alzheimer's research to \$1.5 million and creates additional opportunities for worldwide collaboration and expanded research into the debilitating disease.

As the sixth leading cause of death in America, and with more than 5 million people living with the disease in the United States, the search for answers about Alzheimer's disease has never been more necessary. Leading researchers, like UTSA's Dr. Perry, are on the verge of breakthrough solutions.

"Not only is Dr. Perry an acknowledged, creative genius in his research field, but he is the dean of seven academic departments with 245 faculty and 5,000 students, and he also collaborates with the best scientists in the world," says foundation trustee Pat Semmes. "We are so honored to support his 30-year passion for looking for answers and are proud to be alongside Dr. Perry in the discovery of a cure for Alzheimer's."

"We are getting closer to understanding fully the sequence of events leading to neuronal oxidative damage and the source of the increased oxygen radicals," Dr. Perry says.

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Through their gifts and involvement, the Semmes Foundation continues the legacy of philanthropic support for education and science established in 1952 by Tom's father, the foundation's founder. The Semmes Foundation's continued investment in neurological research at UTSA is just one of many examples of their support for the university and San Antonio communities.

"I appreciate the support of the Semmes Foundation because it allows us to move forward with our work. Their gifts are a symbol of what philanthropy is all about," Perry says. "We are very grateful for their belief in our efforts."