



CENTER for
BRAINHEALTH®
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

BRAIN MATTERS



Tom Leppert Receives 2022 Legacy Award

On January 25, the Center for BrainHealth® hosted the 15th annual Legacy Award Dinner at the Dallas Country Club, celebrating the Honorable Thomas C. Leppert.

Craig Hall (Founder and Chairman of HALL Group) and Gary Kelly (Executive Chairman of Southwest Airlines Board of Directors) served as the Honorary Chairs. BrainHealth Advisory Board member Craig Kennington and his wife Josey served as the Dinner Chairs.

Unwavering Dedication

For the past 30 years, Leppert has displayed an unwavering passion and dedication to his work leading major national and international corporations in the areas of construction, financial services, home building, real estate, and academic success – not to mention his years serving as Mayor of Dallas.

His role as a co-leader of The BrainHealth Project made him the fitting choice for BrainHealth's 2022 Legacy Award, the Center's highest non-science honor. "When you think about the Center for BrainHealth, this guy is the poster child, and a very deserving honoree," said Gary Kelly.



He is an education visionary and a pragmatic leader making The BrainHealth Project succeed.

Dr. Geoff Ling

Professor of Neurology, Johns Hopkins
BrainHealth Project Co-leader

One of Tom's fellow co-leaders of The BrainHealth Project, Dr. Geoff Ling, explained how Tom's leadership is helping Dallas and the Center for BrainHealth lead the way in an international dialogue about the brain in health, rather than only a focus on brain disease or injury.

Center for BrainHealth Chief Director Dr. Sandra Bond Chapman presented Leppert with the Legacy Award, stating, "Tom is an algorithmic thinker, a problem solver, an authentic and humble leader. He uses his brilliance not for money, but to make this world a better place."

In accepting the award, Leppert underscored that the Center for BrainHealth is truly making a difference at the forefront of brain research impacting the lives of so many people and redefining the way society thinks about brain health, adding that "to me, the real excitement is the future."

Thanks to Supporters

Special thanks to the event's patrons: Kay and Will Beecherl, Marena and Roger Gault, Kathryn and Craig Hall, Carol Heller, TD Jakes, Carol and Gary Kelly, Josey and Craig Kennington, Linda and Joel Robuck, Mary and Richard Templeton, Bank of Texas, Center for BrainHealth, Ryan LLC, and Southwest Airlines.

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Scenes from the 2022 Legacy Award Dinner



Tom Leppert, Sandi Chapman



Mary McDermott Cook, Dan Patterson, Bukky and John Olajide, Sandi Chapman, Roger and Marena Gault



Brian Conroy, Brandi Sinclair



Craig and Josey Kennington, Tom and Laura Leppert, Sandi Chapman, Craig and Kathryn Hall, Carol and Gary Kelly



Jacquelyn Gamino, Jonathan and Christina Smith



Sarah Jane and Noah Chapman



Geoff Ling, Jennifer and Peter Roberts



Amanda and Brint Ryan



Geoff Ling, Jean Ann Brock



Craig and Josey Kennington



Beverly and Don Freeman



Craig Hall, Sandi Chapman, Stafford Sutton, Jr.



Fred and Jan Hegi, Roy and Janis Coffee



William Beecherl, Jr. and Hattee Taylor



Rob and Alison McIntosh, Bart and Jolie Humphrey



FIRST-RATE IMAGING FOR FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH

Leveraging state-of-the-art technology, the UT Dallas BrainHealth Imaging Center is on course to advance federally funded research across Texas. The facility’s two 3-tesla magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanners enable new analytics, new technology and new approaches to create completely new visualization capabilities. It provides an ideal environment for leading-edge research as well as training the next generation of scientists.

Since opening in 2019, it has primarily served researchers affiliated with UT Dallas, a Tier One research university. Welcoming a wider range of scientists to gather and interpret rich research data underscores the Center for BrainHealth’s collaborative mission to advance the science of brain health. The center will be open to researchers from academic, medical and other health institutions in the Dallas area.

Importantly, this move will also generate revenue to support the facility’s operation. Dr. Bart Rypma, Director of the UT Dallas BrainHealth Imaging Center and Meadows Foundation Endowed Chair in Behavioral and Brain Sciences, offers an expansive vision for the future: “Philanthropic funding is critical, but by maximizing this facility’s potential as a revenue driver, we will truly thrive as an innovation hub.”

Managed by experienced MRI personnel, the facility offers support beyond data acquisition, including assistance in implementing study protocols and developing pulse sequences using the latest technology.

The BrainHealth Imaging Center extends comforts to research participants without feeling like a hospital. Before entering the scanner, participants unwind in a multisensory brain reset room, specially designed

Dr. Bart Rypma



Philanthropic funding is critical, but by maximizing this facility’s potential as a revenue driver, we will truly thrive as an innovation hub.

Bart Rypma, PhD

Director, UT Dallas BrainHealth Imaging Center
Meadows Foundation Endowed Chair

to stimulate a relaxed state of mind through gentle music, aroma therapy and award-winning MovingArt™ calming visual scenes.

The facility is located within the Brain Performance Institute, an expansive, welcoming building framed with an elliptical design inspired by the frontal lobe. The distinctive space invites visitors to stimulate, train and enhance their brains while immersed in brain-inspired art and architecture.

Reward-Motivated Behaviors in Addiction

Kristen Platt is a doctoral student in Dr. Francesca Filbey’s lab. She explores decision-making and the effects of substance abuse on the brain.

“I have always been fascinated by the human brain and decision making,” said Kristen. “In Dr. Filbey’s lab, I’m able to perform research that investigates neural mechanisms involved in reward-motivated behaviors.”

Kristen’s current projects focus on what drives substance users to partake in risky behaviors. By utilizing behavioral assessments and neuroimaging techniques,



Kristen Platt

she can better understand this relationship and why substance use behavior may persist.

“My future goal involves using this information to develop safe and effective techniques to mediate the effects of a disrupted reward-motivational loop,” she continued. **“I’m excited for the implications of this research and enjoy the academic community at the Center for BrainHealth.”**

Inspiring All to Do Something New

Thanks to a major gift from the Eugene McDermott Foundation, people everywhere will soon be able to make an ordinary day extraordinary through the online delivery of two intentional practices: Do Something New™ and the Power of Observation™.

Do Something New establishes a daily practice of thoughtful exploration – large and small – that over time can strengthen and repair neural pathways that have suffered due to routinized thinking and activities. The Power of Observation is designed to improve focus and integrate new ideas to create a deeper understanding of the world in which we live.



Bonnie Pitman

These practices were created and codified by Bonnie Pitman, Director of Art-Brain Innovations at the Center for BrainHealth and a renowned art scholar, historian, and past Director of the Dallas Museum of Art. They serve to complement and strengthen The BrainHealth Project by providing new, innovative practices that contribute to a person’s expanding brain health.

“Doing something new has brought wonder, curiosity, awe and joy into my daily life for the past 10-plus years. And even better, my BrainHealth colleagues have connected the dots through science to the brain processes involved,” said Pitman. “I am thrilled that by building an online offering, these impactful practices will soon be available to all BrainHealth Project participants.”



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Bonnie Pitman

Director Art-Brain Innovations

Why I Give



When I met a Navy veteran who told me BrainHealth’s high performance brain training changed the trajectory of his life, I immediately wanted to make it possible for other warriors to experience the same benefits. I can think of no one more deserving of support and empowerment than those whose first priority is to serve us – our warriors.

BrainHealth’s mission is life-changing and the work is profoundly important. I am proud to be associated with such a world-class enterprise which seeks to change our very definition of health.

Marlane Miller

BrainHealth donor since 2012

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The entire Center for BrainHealth team celebrated with Chief Director Sandra Bond Chapman, PhD on her well-deserved recognition as one of the 500 most powerful and influential business leaders in North Texas, in the Health Innovation and Research category.

Developing Executive Function in Middle School



Dr. Jacquie Gamino and Dr. Sandra Chapman recently met with TEA Commissioner Mike Morath to discuss education policy and the most recent results of the Adolescent Reasoning Initiative. The BrainHealth team is proud to partner with educators to expand this important work that has benefited thousands of students.

Transforming middle school classrooms since 2009, the Adolescent Reasoning Initiative™ has reached more than 82,000 students over the past 12 years. Led by Dr. Jacquelyn Gamino, the BrainHealth team trains teachers in high-level executive function, helping create powerful learning experiences regardless of student backgrounds.

Why middle school?

Although students cannot drop out yet, middle school is often when they make that decision. These are critical years to set them up for future success, yet few interventions target this age group.

The brain is undergoing a tremendous amount of development during the middle school years. The development increases neural plasticity and makes learning new skills more efficient. The teachers we train introduce new ways of thinking that strengthen students' engagement in learning and make a long-term difference.

What's the process?

We start with a five-day summer intensive workshop for teachers. They learn about the SMART™ protocol, their own metacognition, the role of executive function in learning, and the adolescent brain. When the teachers start implementing SMART, we visit their classrooms for observation, modeling, and ongoing coaching. We work side-by-side with teachers conducting pre- and post-SMART testing to ensure the program is working well.

What happened during COVID?

Early in the pandemic, we leveraged BrainHealth technology to pivot from in-person to virtual training and implementation. We have since discovered that SMART strategies relieved some of the student anxiety that was amplified during COVID: thinking about the bigger picture helps students realize that things will get better.

What happens next?

We continue to collaborate with educational leaders to expand our reach across Texas and beyond. Two new publications will be out this year documenting our success with teacher training and our exciting finding that student well-being improved measurably with SMART training.

How is this program funded?

We have been fortunate to receive funding from the State of Texas and many philanthropic individuals and foundations. Our funding means that we do not have to charge public schools for this valuable program.

Scenes from a BrainHealthy Workplace

Meeting Challenges with Better Focus



Bob Priest-Heck

Freeman CEO Bob Priest-Heck recently blogged about his experience as a participant in his company's 20-week BrainHealthy Workplace™ program. The global event agency kicked off the program last spring to support staff after nearly two years of pandemic stress and uncertainty that affected his industry like no other.

He said, "Freeman embarked on this program to help our people, who have been under extraordinary stress for nearly two years. In addition to serious pandemic woes, they have seen the conference and tradeshow industry they love, their careers, and their own company brought to the brink. And now we are asking them to hit the ground running as the business returns, even as we put in place new processes and procedures they have to learn as they go. So yes, brain health is a priority."

“ ”

I can already see how this brain health initiative will reduce stress levels and boost productivity. Starting with my own.

Bob Priest-Heck
CEO, Freeman

The first cohort experienced increased productivity, a change also reflected in aggregate pre- and post-scores on the BrainHealth Index (BHI), with 91% of participants seeing an improvement. Priest-Heck noted, "Specifically, they were doing much better finding time and space to focus deeply, to handle the demands of the day, and to avoid distractions."

Police Leaders Safeguard Cognitive Health

The Rockwall Police Department has made a long-term commitment to brain health, enrolling 30 of their leaders in the BrainHealthy Workplace™.

According to Chief Max Geron, the training "is unlike any other police training that we've been through. It isn't focused on policing. It's focused on the brain. It's focused on improving your cognition, strategic attention, innovation."

The partnership aims to support officers in critical moments when high-level decision making depends upon precision brain performance. Helping lead this initiative, BrainHealth Coach Katie



Max Geron

Hinds hopes that "everyone walks out thinking, 'I have control over how my brain is functioning.'"

“ ”

It's unlike any other police training that we've been through. It isn't focused on policing. It's focused on the brain. It's focused on improving your cognition, strategic attention, innovation.

Max Geron
Rockwall Police Chief

All-Star Gamers Amplify Brain Performance



Andrew Cooley

Esports Performance Academy, a training ground for players in this growing and highly-competitive industry, launched a partnership with BrainHealth to implement a novel performance initiative for esports players.

A targeted group of EPA clients and students is participating in The BrainHealth Project, to explore how the brain health measures of esports gamers can be affected by SMART™ protocols. The ultimate goal is to implement science-backed healthy brain practices throughout the esports industry, for a new approach to pro training.

Few studies currently exist to provide a comprehensive understanding of players' brain health and ways to maximize performance. BrainHealth researchers plan to leverage experience working with top performers and people in high-stress environments, such as military special ops and first responders.

Andrew Cooley, CEO of Esports Performance Academy, said the partnership aims "to change the paradigm of this industry, to be proactive and preventive when it comes to players' brain health."



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Keep Sharp



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Each month, the most fascinating speakers participate in interactive conversations about the latest advances in brain health science, technology and real-world application. All talks are virtual and free of charge.

Register for the season and attend as many talks as you like.