TAMEST Texas Academy of Medicine, Engineering, Science & Technology

Newsletter

HILL PRIZES

Lyda Hill Philanthropies Awards $1.1 Million in Additional Funding to 2025 Hill Prizes Applicants

TAMEST and Lyda Hill Philanthropies are pleased to announce that $1.1 million in research funding was awarded to 11 exceptional researchers from the 2025 Hill Prizes applicant pool. These researchers have been awarded $100,000 each in ad hoc funding from Lyda Hill Philanthropies to continue their work.

"The quality that the Hill Prizes selection committees saw in this year's applicant pool made it clear we needed to go further," said **Lyda Hill, Founder of Lyda Hill Philanthropies.** "These 11 researchers and their colleagues are exploring groundbreaking research in Texas to some of the biggest challenges we face and we are eager to see the progress they make with this support." Read More

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TAMEST Annual Fund: Year in Review

In 2025, TAMEST reached several significant milestones, further strengthening Texas as a premier hub of innovation and research. This year's accomplishments are vital steps towards our shared mission of establishing a stronger research ecosystem in Texas. We need your continued partnership to continue to propel Texas forward. Please join us in paving the way for a stronger future for research, discovery, and innovation in Texas by contributing to the TAMEST Annual Fund. Read More

Early Bird Pricing Ends Next Month: TAMEST 2026 Annual Conference

There is only one month left to receive early bird pricing on registration for the TAMEST 2026 Annual Conference: Pioneering Climate Innovations, February 2-4, 2026, at the Kimpton Santo Hotel in San Antonio, presented by Breyer Capital and Lyda Hill Philanthropies. Register **by Wednesday, December 17, 2025, to save 25% on registration.** Early registration is encouraged as space is limited, and the conference may sell out. Don't miss this opportunity to take an in-depth look at how science and innovation can help navigate the challenges of our changing world. Read More

TAMEST Profile: TAMEST 2026 Annual Conference Medicine Co-Chair David Gimeno Ruiz de Porras, Ph.D., UT San Antonio

Dr. David Gimeno Ruiz de Porras, UT San Antonio School of Public Health, is an environmental and social epidemiologist by training. Dr. Gimeno's research explores how workplace and environmental conditions shape long-term health outcomes - especially in high-need and resource-limited communities' populations. TAMEST connected with Dr. Gimeno to talk about the TAMEST 2026 Annual Conference and to explain how his work exemplifies the power of collaboration in strengthening environmental resilience and enhancing workforce health development across Texas and beyond. Read More

Featured Photo

2025 Mary Beth Maddox Award Lecture Series in Houston

2025 Mary Beth Maddox Award and Lectureship Recipient Gerta Hoxhaj, Ph.D., Children's Medical Center Research Institute at UT Southwestern Medical Center (CRI), presented her groundbreaking research to more than 190 individuals as part of the Mary Beth Maddox Award Lecture Series on Tuesday, October 21, at MD Anderson Cancer Center and Wednesday, October 22, at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. Her lecture "Metabolic Regulation of Cancer Cell Growth" focused on nucleotide metabolism and the impact of dietary nucleotides in fueling cancer cell growth.

Dr. Hoxhaj was introduced by Mary Beth Maddox Award Committee Chair Helen Heslop, M.D., D.Sc. (NAM) at Baylor College of Medicine and Mary Beth Maddox Award Committee Member Helen Piwnica-Worms, Ph.D. (NAM, NAS) at MD Anderson Cancer Center. As part of the lecture series, she also met with several distinguished faculty at the institutions, including TAMEST Member Ronald A. DePinho, M.D. (NAM, NAS), MD Anderson Cancer Center. View photos from the lectures here.

TAMEST In The News

Innovation Map: **Texas Voters OK $3 Billion for New Dementia Research Institute**, *Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (DPRIT)*

TIME: **Are Robot Pants the Future Spacesuit?**, *TAMEST Member Kate Rubins, Ph.D. (NAM), 75th US Army Reserve Innovation Command*

News Medical: **Fruit Flies Illuminate the Role of Alzheimer's Disease Risk Genes**, *TAMEST Member Hugo J. Bellen, D.V.M., Ph.D. (NAS), Baylor College of Medicine*

Smithsonian Magazine: **How Far American Women Astronauts Have Soared Since Sally Ride Took Her Historic Spaceflight**, *TAMEST Member Mae C. Jemison, M.D. (NAM), The Jemison Group*

ISSUES: **Still Unprepared for the Next Pandemic**, *TAMEST Member and 2025 Hill Prize in Public Health Recipient Peter J. Hotez, M.D., Ph.D. (NAM), Baylor College of Medicine*

MSN: **NASA's TRACERS To Study 'Magnetic Explosions' Triggered by Space Weather**, *TAMEST Board Member Stephen A. Fuselier, Ph.D. (NAS), Southwest Research Institute*

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Member Briefs

In Memoriam:

Bert W. O'Malley, M.D. (NAM, NAS)
1936 – 2025
Baylor College of Medicine
TAMEST (Texas Academy of Medicine, Engineering, Science and Technology)

TAMEST mourns the loss of beloved **TAMEST Member Bert W. O'Malley, M.D. (NAM, NAS), Baylor College of Medicine**. Dr. O'Malley was a visionary scientist, esteemed member of TAMEST, and an influential force in advancing Texas research.
He was considered the founding father of molecular endocrinology, a visionary whose work profoundly transformed the field and changed its understanding in a fundamental way. His pioneering discoveries revealed that intracellular hormones and cofactors regulate gene activity, driving protein production and influencing how cells work. Dr. O'Malley's contributions to the scientific community will continue to impact the lives of many for generations to come.

Pedro J.J. Alvarez Honored with Benjamin Franklin Medal in Civil Engineering

TAMEST Member Pedro J. J. Alvarez, Ph.D. (NAE), Rice University, a world leader in environmental nanotechnology and water sustainability, has been awarded the 2026 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Civil Engineering, one of the oldest and most prestigious science and engineering honors in the United States. Read More

Metabolic Hormone Found to Boost Resilience Against Flu Symptoms

A hormone known for regulating energy balance also helps the body cope with influenza by triggering protective responses in the brain, a study led by **UT Southwestern Medical Center** researchers including **TAMEST Member and 2025 Hill Prize in Biological Sciences Co-PI Steven A. Kliewer, Ph.D. (NAS),** shows. The findings, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), suggest that targeting this pathway could offer a new pharmacological approach for treating the flu. Read More

Innovation to Impact: Rebecca Richards-Kortum Previews Rice360's Innovation for Healthcare Access Conference

TAMEST Member Rebecca R. Richards-Kortum, Ph.D. (NAM, NAE, NAS), co-director of the Rice360 Institute for Global Health Technologies at **Rice University**, has spent her career breaking barriers between innovation and impact. A trailblazer in global health engineering, she leads with a whole-systems approach, developing not only groundbreaking medical technologies but also the sustainable networks that ensure those tools save lives in real-world settings. Read More

Words of Wisdom to Postdocs from UTSW Trailblazers

Four distinguished **UT Southwestern Medical Center** scientists who are members of the National Academies inspired postdoctoral researchers by sharing their own experiences as postdocs, offering words of encouragement for working through challenging times and providing insight for paths toward breakthrough discoveries. The panel discussion included **TAMEST Members Sean J. Morrison, Ph.D. (NAM, NAS), Ralph DeBerardinis, M.D., Ph.D. (NAM), Lora Hooper, Ph.D. (NAM, NAS), and TAMEST Board Member Kim Orth, Ph.D. (NAS).** Read More

School of Dentistry at UT Health San Antonio Awarded $6 Million Total to Study Treatment, Pain Management for Oral Cancer

Researchers at the School of Dentistry at **UT Health San Antonio** including **TAMEST 2025 Hill Prize in Medicine Recipient Kenneth M. Hargreaves, D.D.S., Ph.D.**, have been awarded three multi-year grants totaling $6 million from the National Institutes of Health to address treatment and pain management for oral cancer. The grants propose new targets to stem deadly oral squamous cell carcinoma and novel approaches to treat oral mucositis, massive inflammation and ulcers in the oral cavity that can result from radiotherapy treatment. Read More

Rice Launches Brain Institute to Accelerate Discoveries in Brain Science and Health

Rice University has announced the creation of the Rice Brain Institute (RBI), an ambitious, interdisciplinary hub that unites faculty members across campus, including engineering, natural sciences and social sciences, to tackle one of humanity's most complex and promising frontiers: the brain. "Few areas of research have as direct and profound an impact on human well-being as brain health," **Rice University President and TAMEST Member Reginald DesRoches, Ph.D. (NAE),** said. Read More

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About TAMEST

TAMEST was co-founded in 2004 by the Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison and Nobel Laureates Michael S. Brown, M.D., and Richard E. Smalley, Ph.D. With more than 355 members, eight Nobel Laureates and 23 member institutions, TAMEST is composed of the Texas-based members of the three National Academies (National Academy of Medicine, National Academy of Engineering and National Academy of Sciences) and other honorific organizations. We bring together the state's brightest minds in medicine, engineering, science and technology to foster collaboration, and to advance research, innovation and business in Texas.

TAMEST's unique interdisciplinary model has become an effective recruitment tool for top research and development centers across Texas. Since our founding, more than 325 TAMEST members have been inducted into the National Academies or relocated to Texas.

TAMEST's 23 Member Institutions

Baylor College of Medicine · Baylor University · Rice University · SMU · Baylor Scott & White Health · Texas A&M Health · Texas Biomedical · Texas Tech · Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center · UTA · UT Austin · The University of Texas at Dallas · The University of Texas at El Paso · UT San Antonio · UT Health Houston · MD Anderson Cancer Center · UTMB Health · UTRGV · UT Health Houston · UNT Health Fort Worth · UNT Health · UT Southwestern Medical Center

TAMEST recognizes members of the Founders of the Endowment and the Legacy Circle, whose extraordinary commitment ensures sustainable funds to continue the mission of promoting excellence in science and technology.

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