

## **Remarks for Frederick C. Elliott, D.D.S., Avenue naming by Catherine M. Flaitz, D.D.S.**

Welcome everyone – it is wonderful to see leaders from the Texas Medical Center, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Greater Houston Dental Society, and Dental Branch faculty, staff and alumni.

Some would say a street in the Texas Medical Center bearing the name of Dr. Frederick Elliott is long overdue. As one of the Texas Medical Center's renowned founders and visionaries they would question why it arrives only now. But timing is everything and I say the timing of this dedication is impeccable.

By dedicating this street in the centennial year of The University of Texas Dental Branch at Houston, we have the opportunity to not only recognize how much Dr. Elliott meant to the Texas Medical Center but also to the success of his beloved dental school and the advancement of dentistry in Texas.

Dr. Elliott came to the Dental Branch to serve as dean in 1932. In his autobiography, *Birth of the Texas Medical Center*, when asked why he came to Houston after serving as the dean for several years, he admitted that he had a dream – what that dream was, he could no longer remember. To me this statement illustrated a man who was honest, humorous, humble and focused on the future. We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to this dental educator, clinician and administrator who took a fledging dental school with a questionable future and helped to shape it into a nationally recognized institution. He simply followed his dream and acted upon it, rescuing the

Dental Branch from a financial crisis and securing its future by orchestrating a merger with the University of Texas.

Dr. Bonham Magness an alumnus, adjunct faculty member and Houston area orthodontist recounted a first-hand experience with Dr. Elliott's character in a recent letter:

*"In 1952, as a member of the freshman class at the UT Dental Branch I gathered with my dental school "rookies" ... to be welcomed into the world of dentistry by Dean Frederick C. Elliott. What an introduction it was. Dr. Elliott spent the better part of an hour making us realize how fortunate we were to be a part of this wonderful profession. He challenged us, cajoled us, encouraged us and had us prepared to go to battle for the dental profession."*

*"He spoke straight from the heart and as I realized later, he had a big, big heart even extending beyond the dental school. He was perhaps the leading individual in the formation of the Texas Medical Center. At that time the genius of this individual was beyond my concept, but I have come to realize what a man of vision he was. It is one thing to have vision but it is another to be able to convey a perception that still exists in my mind almost 53 years later."*

As clearly stated by Dr. Magness, Dr. Elliott was a visionary. We at the UT Dental Branch are proud that he used those qualities to benefit dentistry and overall health. The UT Dental Branch couldn't be any more proud to have such a significant role in the TMC's naming of Dr. Frederick C. Elliott Avenue.

Thank you for being here and honoring a true leader.