



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™

News Release

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TTUHSC Professor and Surgeon Receives National Award

John Griswold, M.D., Honored for Lifetime Achievements

The American Burn Association (ABA) recently presented the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award to Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center ([TTUHSC](https://www.ttuhsc.edu)) professor and burn surgeon John A. Griswold, M.D. He is the 13th recipient since the award was first presented in 1977.

The ABA Lifetime Achievement Award honors individuals whose outstanding achievements and extraordinary contributions have left a lasting mark on burn care.

In its award announcement, the ABA noted, “Dr. Griswold has spent over 30 years training surgeons, nurses and therapists in burn care and has been an active ABA member since 1985, contributing to clinical excellence, education and research.”

Specifically, the ABA cited Griswold as “leading the UMC Timothy J. Harnar Regional Burn Center through 11 consecutive verifications since 1993, making it one of the longest continuously verified centers in the United States.”

In addition to serving as the burn center’s medical director, Griswold has a clinical practice at Texas Tech Physicians. He is vice chair of quality assurance and performance improvement and vice chair of education in the TTUHSC School of Medicine's Department of Surgery. Griswold also is executive director of the Clinical Research Institute, which supports and oversees all clinical research activities throughout TTUHSC.

“For 33 years, Dr. John Griswold has been the heartbeat of the burn service in our university. His vision and commitment to the care of these patients have been the inspiration for several generations of talented physicians who have followed his path,” John C. DeToledo, M.D., TTUHSC executive vice president for clinical affairs and dean of the School of Medicine, said. “His warm personality and professional charisma helped him to be the face of ‘burn care’ in Texas for decades.”

Griswold sees his clinical, educational and research roles as interrelated imperatives. His philosophy is that every patient interaction is an opportunity to improve health care for

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the future.

“Medicine should never be stagnant,” he said. “Not only do we have to do our very best to take the best care of every patient, but it behooves us to figure out how to make things better. Research is the only way to discover and validate that.”

Griswold is credited with more than 90 peer-reviewed articles focusing on topics including pathophysiology and metabolic effects of injury, wound healing, infection and infection prevention and the assessment of devices and products that improve healing and prevent scarring.

“TTUHSC’s translational research is making great strides,” Griswold said. “These are things that make patients get better or more comfortable as they're getting better. We've made incredible advances and influenced all the burn centers on pain management and burn injury care, on how we provide nutrition and regarding special dressings and therapies. On almost everything you can think of, we've had an impact nationally because of the research.”

A native of Casper, Wyoming, Griswold’s general surgery residency at TTUHSC from 1982 to 1986 was followed by fellowships at the University of Washington in Seattle involving burn, trauma and critical care. He returned to TTUHSC in 1992 and established an active surgery practice.

Griswold said he recognized early in his medical training that the nature of burn injuries poses unique challenges, something he emphasizes during the course of teaching a multidisciplinary group of learners at the burn center.

“No one would disagree that a burn injury is the worst of diseases and injuries; burn injury patients are the sickest patients in the hospital,” he said. “A burn injury is a very visible injury, so it's a lifelong injury just from that aspect. The recovery is so complex and prolonged that both the patient and the family end up being changed forever. But getting them through that and getting them to the other side are very rewarding. It truly takes a specially focused team approach to medical care.”

Griswold was chair of the TTUHSC School of Medicine’s Department of Surgery from 1997 to 2016. From 2000 to 2014, he was the medical director of the Level 1 Trauma Center, now the John A. Griswold Trauma Center at UMC.

Griswold was recognized as a TTUHSC Distinguished Alumnus in 2017, the university's highest honor, which is bestowed upon alumni who have made significant contributions to the health care profession.

“While I feel incredibly humbled and honored, this is not about me; it's about all the people I get to work with,” Griswold said. “We've changed the face of burn care in a number of ways together. When there’s love, there’s no labor. I love doing what I do, and I do the best I can every day.”