

The Element

December 2022



▲ Elsie Eckert presented BRASS Founder Myra Wilson a special gift, and announced she had been awarded the honor of being named as a BRASS Honorary Lifetime Member.



◀ Dr. Julia Elvin, our first BRASS Scholar (1995-96 MD/PhD) flew in from Boston for the celebration. She spoke about the impact of the BRASS Scholarship, enhancing both her personal and professional life.



▲ Linda Kuykendall and Elsie Eckert thank Sidney Faust for graciously opening her beautiful home and underwriting the BRASS 25th Celebration.

A Message from the BRASS President

Dear Brass Family,

Wishing you all the joys of the holiday season. This has been a banner year for BRASS! We celebrated 25 years of BRASS moments, memories, and milestones; saluted our BRASS Scholars' outstanding work; and toasted you, our generous donors, for your continued and dedicated support. Thank you, again, for your belief in BRASS and our mission. As we look to the next 25 years, we renew our commitment to these brilliant student scientists and their research, which continues to reveal countless medical discoveries and breakthroughs for all of us. We will look back at the impact we have made as a reminder and inspiration of the good that can be accomplished when people come together because they believe in a common goal... **Research is the Answer!**

Although it was actually our 27th year, on May 4, 2022, we finally got to be together to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of BRASS. What a grand celebration it was, as 165 guests enjoyed Sidney Faust's gracious and generous hospitality. Her beautiful home and gardens created a fun and festive evening for everyone.

We saluted the legacy of many wonderful **BRASS Memories & Milestones**, acknowledging those who helped make them happen with a video showcasing 25 years of BRASS highlights. We welcomed back 12 of our past Scholars, including our very first BRASS Scholar, Julia Elvin. It was a magical evening of cherished memories as we reflected on all we've accomplished and the lasting foundation each of you have helped us build.

- Four endowed BRASS Scholarships - Sidney Broadfoot Faust, Don D Jordan, Don D. Sykora, and Myra Branum Wilson
- William R. Brinkley BRASS Endowed Chair
- 20 active BRASS Scholars obtaining their Ph.D. in research
- Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo Research Partner & Benefactor
- David & Eula Wintermann Foundation / Jack and Judi Johnson Endowed Research Partner & Benefactor Fund
- Buck Bukowski Research Travel Endowment Fund
- Donald E. McMahon/Ed McMahon Research & Recruitment Endowment Fund
- More than \$10M dollars raised to date

As always, the BRASS Board and I truly appreciate all of you for your continued support for our amazing BRASS Scholars. Our BRASS scholarships are increasingly effective in attracting the best and the brightest students who add to the college's ever-growing expertise in biomedical research. We could not do it without your support!

Best wishes for a prosperous 2023,
 Elsie



▲ Elsie Eckert with Stella

2022 BRASS 25th Anniversary Celebration

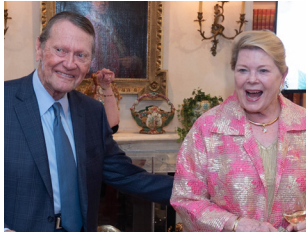
BRASS Milestones Create a Memorable Tribute to 25 Years

On May 4, 2022, 165 people gathered at the magnificent River Oaks home of Sidney Faust to celebrate the twenty-fifth Anniversary of BRASS. Hosted and underwritten by Mrs. Faust, the beautiful setting served as the perfect background for an evening to remember! The event raised more than \$59,000 for research, education, and scholarship endowments for our BRASS Scholars. **BRASS Founder Myra Wilson** received the well deserved special honor of being named a **BRASS Honorary Lifetime Member**. Twenty-seven years ago Myra had the keen vision to recognize the need for BRASS and has worked tirelessly and successfully to bring it's mission to fruition. A big BRASS salute to Myra! **Dr. Kelly Larkin** and her husband, **Fernando Parra**, who was unable to attend, were named **2022 BRASS Angels of the Year**. Myra Wilson and Elsie Eckert presented Kelly with a Waterford Crystal angel and a framed certificate acknowledging Kelly and Fernando for their enduring generosity to BRASS and hosting the Scholars' Reception every year. They are indeed BRASS Angels!

BRASS Scholar Matthew Penna MD/PhD (2018-19) presented his mentor **Dr. Thomas Cooper** with the **Diana Brown Memorial Mentor of the Year Award** and a \$500 check. Matt submitted the winning nomination essay of why Dr. Cooper so richly deserved the award. BRASS salutes Dr. Cooper for sharing his wisdom, integrity and compassion that has so impacted the confidence and success of his students. Dr. Cooper is making a difference!

Jack and Judi Johnson were thanked for their 15 years of generous research support through the Wintermann Foundation.

The Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo also received a big BRASS salute for its 16 years of providing funding for the scholars' research equipment and trips to seminars to present their lab findings.



▲ Jack and Judi Johnson are applauded for all they do for BRASS



▲ Elsie Eckert presents Dr. Kelly Larkin the Angel of the Year Award



▲ Guests enjoy the program



▲ Dr. Matthew Penna presents Dr. Tom Cooper with the Diana Brown Memorial Mentor of the Year Award



▲ Cousin Batty Jo Webster, Aunt Linda Akin, Myra Wilson, Aunt Betty Palmertree



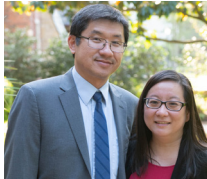
▲ Dr. Mark Pennesi and Dr. Shelley Buffington



▲ Dr. Elizabeth Bowling and Dominique Armstrong



▲ Dr. Larissa Nitschke and Walid Fakhour



▲ Dr. Mingshan Xue and Dr. Tuan Chao



▲ Kassie and Stephen Manning



▲ Dr. Zach Kadow and Dr. Callie McCool



▲ Lily and Dr. Matt Baker



▲ Sarah Waldvogel and Phillip Burkhardt



▲ Stephen Hicks and Sarah Herzog



▲ Dr. Matthew Penna and Molly Marohi



▲ Josh Korb and English Laserna



▲ Juan Romero and Melissa Castro



▲ Jennifer Deger

2022 BRASS 25th Anniversary Celebration



BRASS Welcomes Past Scholars to Celebrate 25 Years

On May 4, twelve past BRASS scholars joined 16 of our current Scholars to embrace and share 25 years of BRASS memories. So many accomplishments and so many more ahead for each of them, it was exciting to have a chance to catch up.

Dr. Julia Elvin, MD/PhD (1995)

Myra B. Wilson Scholar

Laboratory Director and Sr. VP of Pathology & Diagnostic medicine for Foundation Medicine a molecular information company with more than 6,100 employees. Dedicated to a transformation in cancer care utilizing a deep understanding of genomic changes that contribute to each patient's unique cancer. Married to Dr. David Elvin, they have two teenage children.

Dr. Matthew Baker, PhD (1996)

Myra B. Wilson Scholar

Oversees his own lab at UTMB and is a Postdoctoral Fellow at Baylor College of Medicine. Serves on the BRASS Board as the Scholar Selection Liaison and Research Grant Advisor. Married to Amber Baker, they have two girls.

Dr. Sergy Lemesko, MD/PhD (1997)

Don D. Sykora Scholar

Diagnostic radiology specialist in Orange, Texas and is affiliated with multiple hospitals in the area, including Baptist Hospitals of Southeast Texas and Christus Southeast Texas Hospital-St. Elizabeth. He has a teenage son.

Dr. Mark Pennesi MD/PhD (1999)

Myra B. Wilson Scholar

Professor in Ophthalmology at Oregon Health & Science University. He holds the Kenneth C. Swan Endowed Professorship and is the Chief of the Ophthalmic Genetics Division at the Casey Eye Institute. Clinician scientist with a passion for developing novel therapeutic regimens for inherited retinal diseases.

Dr. Hsiao Tuan Chao MD/PhD (2004)

Don D. Sykora Scholar

Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Section of Neurology and Developmental Neuroscience, Department of Molecular and Human Genetics, Baylor College of Medicine. Oversees her own lab in the Jan and Dan Duncan Neurological Research Institute at Texas Children's Hospital. Research focus: neurodevelopmental and neuropsychiatric disorders HADD syndrome, autism, and epilepsy. She is married to Dr. Mingshan Xue.

Dr. Shelly Buffington, PhD (2007)

Don D. Jordan Scholar

Assistant Professor, University of Texas Medical Branch where she oversees her own lab. Served three years on the BRASS Board as a BRASS Scholar Selection Committee member. Married to Jesse Buffington and they have three girls.

Dr. Kassie Manning, PhD (2012)

Don D. Jordan Scholar

Worked at McKinsey & Co. for three years. Currently is the Director of Operations at Every Sacred Sunday, LLC a spiritual journal company. Has written and published three books. Married to Stephen Manning, they have a baby girl.

Dr. Paul Fahey, MD/PhD (2014)

Sidney B. Faust Scholar

Research specialist in Neuroscience in the lab of Dr. Andreas Tolias at Baylor College of Medicine.

Dr. Larissa Nitschke, PhD (2014)

Don D. Jordan Scholar

Postdoctoral Associate at the Department of Pathology and Immunology in the Lab of Dr. Thomas Cooper at Baylor College of Medicine. Married to Walid Fakhour.

Dr. Elizabeth Bowling, PhD (2015)

Don D. Sykora Scholar

Research assistant in the lab of Dr. Trey Westbrook at Baylor College of Medicine. Married to Adam Bowling, they have a little girl.

Dr. Patrick Hunt, MD/PhD (2016)

Myra B. Wilson Scholar

Molecular & Human Genetics. PhD defense in 2022, back in medical school. Married to Fabiola Andújar.

Dr. Zachary Kadow, MD/PhD (2016)

Don D. Sykora Scholar

Developmental Biology. PhD defense in 2022, back in medical school. Married to Dr. Callie McCool.

Dr. Rowland Pettit, MD/PhD (2019)

Myra B. Wilson Scholar

Quantitative and Computational Biosciences. PhD defense in 2022, back in medical school.



2022 BRASS 25th Anniversary Celebration



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| 1. Debby Leighton, Henry and Doe Florsheim | 13. Julia Elvin, Dr. Matt Baker and Lily Baker | 25. Janet Hansen and Lynn Kamin |
| 2. Rosanette Cullen and Judi Johnson | 14. Hershey Grace and Ed McMahon | 26. Steve and Marcia Brown |
| 3. Kathleen and Tom Mach | 15. Linda Kuykendall, Elsie Eckert and Joni Baird | 27. Julia Elvin, Frank and Ann Elvin |
| 4. Tamara and Dr. James Bonar | 16. David and Mary Ann McKeithan | 28. SJ and Will Swanson |
| 5. Michelle Collins and Jody Merritt | 17. Myra Wilson and Michelle Collins | 29. Mary Ellen and Rod Crosby |
| 6. Edna Meyer Nelson and Judi Johnson | 18. Chris Kase and Sharon Worley | 30. Chuck and Araly Simmons |
| 7. Judi McGee and Mike Waller | 19. Jeanie and Marshall Smith | 31. Dr. Scott Basinger and guests enjoy the program |
| 8. Dee and Danny Faust | 20. Kemy Rogers, Robin Simon and Dr. David Wright | 32. Jennifer and Doma Stokes |
| 9. Vesna and Dr. Jeffrey Southwick | 21. John and Betty Hrcir | 33. Stephanie Keeling and Malcolm McDonald |
| 10. Elsie Eckert and Sidney Faust | 22. Beth and Cynthia Wolff | 34. Ishani Desai and Chirraag Kapadia |
| 11. Dean Carolyn Smith and Klys Reedyk | 23. Betty and Jesse Tutor | 35. Bob Bibb and Don Flowers |
| 12. Harry* and Cora Sue Mach | 24. Jo Ann Petersen, Lisa Chandler and Linda Kuykendall | 36. John Baik and Linda Zhang |
| | | 37. Myra Wilson and Dr. Kelly Larkin |

*Deceased

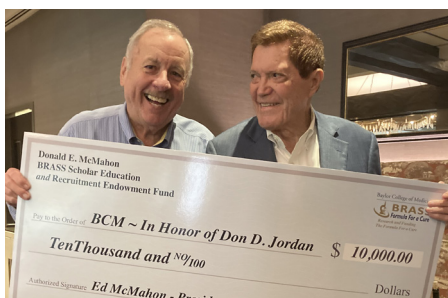
BRASS Highlights

Outstanding Trailblazer Scientist Award is Established in Don Jordan's Honor



On July 20, the BRASS Executive board surprised Board member Don Jordan with the announcement that the **Don D. Jordan BRASS Outstanding Trailblazer Scientist Award** had been established in his honor. The award will be presented annually at the **Tea & Toddies** event and includes a \$1,000 gift. It will be given to a current BRASS Scholar who exemplifies the traits of outstanding future leadership with unparalleled academic performance, research excellence, publications, fellowships, grants, patents, and presentations; combined with citizenship encompassing past honors, awards teaching, tutoring, community service and outreach.

Dinner at the Houstonian, complete with a birthday cake especially created for Don's 90th birthday, followed. The BRASS Board thanked Don for his continued guidance and presented him with A BRASS PROCLAMATION of thanks for all he has done for BRASS. **Ed McMahon**, philanthropic BRASS Board member and longtime dear friend of Don, generously donated \$10,000 in Don's Honor to the **Donald E. McMahon BRASS Scholar Education and Recruitment Endowment Fund**.



BRASS Proclamation & Birthday Wishes

WHEREAS, Twenty-seven years ago **Don Jordan** believed in the mission of BRASS "**Research + Funding = The Formula For a Cure**"; and

WHEREAS, **Don** had faith in the founding members and their conviction that the way to accomplish this mission was by providing funding for scholarships and research; and

WHEREAS, As a respected, skilled solutions-focused leader in business **Don Jordan** reached out to other Houston executives and philanthropists and asked for and got their support on behalf of BRASS; and

WHEREAS, **Mr. Jordan** expertly undertook teaching our BRASS Scholars the art of "throwing winning quarters" at the Rodeo; and

WHEREAS, thanks to **Mr. Jordan** and his respected leadership with Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, HLS&R became a research partner and benefactor, whose ongoing financial support continues to enhance the research of our BRASS Scholars.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, in honor of his **90th Birthday**, that BRASS has hereby designated **Don D. Jordan** our **BRASS TRAILBLAZER and HERO** because his vision and integrity continue to blaze the trail for the amazing success of BRASS...and as such from this day forward **for always and forever**, he will carry this honored recognition.

FROM THE BRASS BOARD - HAPPY BIRTHDAY DEAR DON

BRASS Officers 2021-2022

Founder **Myra Wilson**
 President **Elsie Eckert**
 Vice President **Dr. James Bonar**
 Treasurer **Lisa Chandler**
 Event Chair **Linda Kuykendall**
 Second Vice President **Don D. Jordan**
 Recording Secretary **Jo Ann Petersen**
 Research Award Liaison **Ed McMahon**
 Scholar Liaison **Elsie Eckert and Peter VanDerlofske**
 Mentor Liaison **Michelle Collins**
 BCM Liaison/Mentor **Dr. Huda Zoghbi**
 2022 Scholar Selection Chair **Peter VanDerlofske**
 Social Secretary & Scholar Selection Committee Member **Robin Simon**
 Scholar Selection & Research Grant Advisor **Dr. Matthew Baker**

BRASS Giving

In Memory of Harry Mach
 Linda & Carl Kuykendall
 Sidney Faust
 Jo Ann Peterson
 Myra Wilson
 Elsie & Les Eckert
 Robin Simon
 Eleanor F. Delery
 Martin J. Fein
 Ellie R. Francisco
 Alice L. Harcrow
 Betty & John Hrcnir
 Sheila E. Mayfield
 Nancy J. Davis Mosley
 Regina J. Rogers
 Ronald W. Woliver
 The Adler Foundation

In Honor of Myra Wilson
 Dick and Ellen Cockrell
 Anny Whyte & Steve Adger
 Chris Kase
 Janet Hansen
 Rosanette Cullen
 SJ and Will Swanson
 Sharon Worley
 Jimmy Webster

In Honor of Elsie Eckert
 Jerry Lamm
 Janet Hansen
 Betty & Jesse Tutor
 Betty & John Hrcnir
 Lilly & Thurman Andress

In Honor of Don D. Jordan
 Ed McMahon

In Memory of Susan G. Glesby
 Suzy Simons

In Memory of Robert L. Stokes
 Donna Stokes

In Memory of Dot Thomason

In Memory of Marcelle Marks
 Myra Wilson