

Francisco G. Cigarroa, MD, Chancellor, The University of Texas System  
– visionary academic leader and nationally renowned transplant surgeon

*Recipient of BioMed SA's 2014 Julio Palmaz Award for Innovation  
in Healthcare and the Biosciences*



**Francisco G. Cigarroa, M.D.**

**Selection Committee rationale:**

A third-generation physician, Dr. Cigarroa continues to advance both the art and science of medicine in our region. He began by saving one child's life at a time as a pediatric transplant surgeon. As President of The UT Health Science Center San Antonio for nine years, he worked to make many lives better through education. Among his many accomplishments were spearheading construction of the South Texas Research Facility to foster a strong research climate and creating the Center for Medical Humanities and Ethics to encourage medical students to approach their work with compassion and empathy. His visionary leadership and unwavering commitment over the past 14 years – both here in San Antonio and for the past five years in Austin as Chancellor of The UT System – are bringing to fruition a school of medicine for the state's most medically underserved region, the Lower Rio Grande Valley, as well as a new medical school in Austin. All the while, he has continued taking surgical calls each month at University Hospital and will soon come full circle to lead the Health Science Center's pediatric transplant program, starting in January 2015.

– Randy Goldsmith, PhD, 2014 Palmaz Committee Chair

Born in Laredo as one of ten children, Dr. Cigarroa graduated from Yale University in 1979 with a bachelor's degree in biology. He earned his medical degree in 1983 from The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. During his postgraduate training, he became chief resident in General Surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston and completed fellowships in Pediatric Surgery and Transplantation Surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. In 2011, Dr. Cigarroa was awarded the Massachusetts General Hospital Trustees' Medal in recognition of his contributions to the advancement of the practice of medicine and patient care.

In 1995, Dr. Cigarroa joined the faculty of The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, serving as Director of Pediatric Surgery before becoming President of the institution from 2000-2009. In 2003, President George W. Bush appointed him to serve on the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science. In 2009, he became the first Hispanic to be named Chancellor of The University of Texas System. In that capacity, he oversees one of the largest public systems of higher education in the nation, which consists of nine universities and six health institutions. He is also vice chairman for policy on the Board of Directors of The University of Texas Investment Management Company.

Dr. Cigarroa is a nationally renowned transplant surgeon and continues to perform liver and kidney transplant surgeries. He is a member of several prestigious societies, including the American College of Surgery, the Institute of Medicine, the American Board of Surgery, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is also an honorary member of the National Academy of Science in Mexico. He was elected to serve as an Alumni Fellow to the Yale Corporation, the university's governing board. He also served as 2010 president of The Academy of Medicine, Engineering and Science of Texas. He currently serves on the National Research Council Committee on Research Universities and on the American Academy Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences. In addition, President Barack Obama appointed Dr. Cigarroa to serve as a commissioner on the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans.

Dr. Cigarroa and his wife, Graciela, an attorney, have two daughters, Maria Cristina and Barbara Carisa.