

## IN MEMORIAM

### GEORGE MICHAEL DECHERD, JR. , M. D.

George Michael Decherd, Jr., M.D., died on March 5, 1951. At the time of his death he was Director of the Student Health Center of The University of Texas.

Dr. Decherd was born in Austin, Texas, December 19, 1906. His father was an Austin physician. George attended the Austin Public Schools and entered The University of Texas in 1922 at the age of 15.

Dr. Decherd was an excellent student at The University of Texas and scholastic honors were loaded upon him. He was a member of the Omega Beta Pi premedical fraternity, and, naturally, he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He was a student assistant in organic chemistry. He received both a B. A. and an M. A. degree from The University of Texas in 1926.

In medical school Dr. Decherd continued to distinguish himself. He chose the University of Minnesota for his medical training, and while there he was a Shevlin Fellow in pharmacology for one year and a research assistant in pharmacology for two years. He was a member of the Phi Chi medical fraternity and was elected to Alpha Omega Alpha and to the honorary scientific fraternities, Gamma Alpha and Sigma Xi.

From Minnesota Dr. Decherd went to the University of Illinois as a research assistant in physiology in 1932. He returned to Minnesota for a year as a fellow in medicine and then came back to Texas as an instructor in medicine at The Texas School of Medicine in Galveston. In 1936 he went to L.S.U. School of Medicine in New Orleans for a two years service as assistant professor of medicine; then he returned to Galveston as associate professor of medicine. In 1945 he was made Director of the Post Graduate Division, and in 1946 he was advanced to Professor of medicine.. It was this year that he received his call to come to Austin as the Director of the University Health Service.

Dr. Decherd's connection with hospitals began in New Orleans where he was visiting physician at Charity Hospital. In Galveston he was assisting physician and attending physician at

John Sealy Hospital, and from 1944 to 1946, he was Director of the heart station. At Austin he was attending physician at Brackenridge Hospital and later, as Chief of Staff, he labored constantly towards better hospital standards. Today its present staff gives him the major credit for its improved level of practice.

Dr. Decherd was a member of the Travis County Medical Society, The Texas Academy of Internal Medicine, Texas State Medical Association, Texas State Heart Association, Texas Club of internists, American Medical Association, American Heart Association, American College Health Association, American Federation for Clinical Research, Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine, Central Society for Clinical Research, American Society for Clinical Investigation, Fellow, American College of Physicians.. He was a Diplomat of the American Board of Internal Medicine. Dr. Decherd was an extensive writer, and while he had publications on many subjects his major interest was the heart and circulatory system. Altogether he published some 70 articles.

Dr. Decherd came to Austin as Director of the University Health Service in the fall of 1946. Immediately he threw himself with great energy into the tremendous task of planning the new Student Health Center. He made extensive studies of college hospitals in other institutions, compared their organizations and equipment; and today our University of Texas Student Health Center is a beautiful memorial to his tireless efforts to make it the outstanding organization that it is.

In 1934 Dr. Decherd married Helen Ann Schultz, of Minneapolis. They had three sons, George Michael III, Jonathan Frank, and James William. These boys show every evidence of having inherited their father's brilliant mind. The oldest, George, who is but 15 years of age, has already matriculated at the University.

Dr. Decherd's friends were many. They were among the young and the old. When a student needed help, either financial or simple advice, Dr. Decherd was generous with either or both. A busy man, he always had time either for consultation with his fellow physicians on their more difficult cases, or for some student who needed advice in working out his planned

profession. A visit in Dr. Decherd's home was a thing to be anticipated as was a visit by him in your own home. His rare humor and keen understanding of human nature made it a pleasure to be with him either professionally or socially.

The University of Texas, the medical profession, his numerous friends and associates - all of us have suffered a severe loss in the death of Dr. Decherd. All of us mourn his going.

Caroline Crowell  
Joe Thorne Gilbert  
Allen M. Forbes  
A. R. Teasdale  
Paul White, Chairman

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A.W.C., Manager