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Lasher Family Gift Accelerates Innovative Infectious Disease Research and Education at Tampa General Hospital

The Lasher Family Research Acceleration program will fund cutting-edge research and education within the hospital.

May 24, 2023 – [Tampa General Hospital](#) today announced a generous gift from the Lasher family of Tampa, Florida, to support the TGH Foundation and infectious disease research

programs. This is a collaboration between Tampa General Hospital and the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine.

The Lasher Family Research Acceleration program will fund cutting-edge research and education concentrating on advanced treatments and critical care for patients suffering with infectious diseases like COVID-19.

Tampa General Hospital is committed to becoming a recognized global leader on the forefront of infectious disease clinical care, research, and education under the direction of Drs. John Sinnott and Kami Kim. Sinnott is the Tampa General director of Epidemiology and Team Member Health at Tampa General Hospital and chair of Internal Medicine at the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine. Kim is Tampa General director of Infectious Disease Research and director of the Division of Infectious Disease and International Medicine at the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine. Kim was site director at Tampa General for national clinical trials for COVID-19 therapeutics including monoclonal antibodies and the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine.

“On behalf of the Lasher family, we hope this gift can serve as the catalyst in making Tampa General Hospital and the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine world-class leaders in infectious disease research, treatment and care,” said Stuart Lasher, founder, chairman and chief executive officer of Quantum Capital Partners Inc., a private investment firm based in Tampa. “The key to this success relies on training and teaching the next generation of infectious disease researchers and physicians under the direction of an internationally recognized pioneer like Dr. Sinnott.”

Recognitions of Sinnott’s contributions to the treatment of infectious diseases include a Service Award, “In Recognition of Volunteer Training in Recognizing Contagious Disease Threats” from the Department of Homeland Security in 2007; a Lifetime Achievement Award from the AIDS Institute in 2006;

the MEDSWU Honorable Award from the Faculty of Medicine at Srinakharinwirot University and the Medical Association of Thailand and the Global Leadership Award presented by HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand in 2008.

In addition to supporting current infectious disease research efforts, the Lasher family gift will accelerate Tampa General's research program, by attracting and recruiting the world's foremost infectious disease researchers who will bring their teams, intellectual property and grants to Tampa General. These combined assets will accelerate both the quality and quantity of infectious disease research at the academic health system.

The Lasher family gift also covers scholarships known as the Lasher-Sinnott Scholars. The physicians who earn these scholarships will participate in a focused, experiential program dedicated to clinical and basic research into infectious disease, working closely with Dr. Sinnott and his team. There are currently more than 20 active clinical research trials focused on infectious diseases including COVID-19, respiratory virus infections and *Staphylococcus aureus* sepsis underway at Tampa General Hospital. Ultimately, the Lasher-Sinnott Scholar research program is expected to result in the development of life-saving treatments for Tampa General's patients and the Tampa Bay community.

"We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of the Lasher family and their commitment to the future of infectious disease research, education and care," said Frann M. Leppla, Tampa General Hospital Foundation's senior vice president and Chief Philanthropy Officer. "Their support lays a strong foundation for advancing the health and well-being of humanity far beyond Florida, while helping Tampa General to drive innovation with the goal of delivering world-class care to the Tampa Bay region and beyond," Leppla said.

Tampa General Hospital was the first hospital in Florida to

offer monoclonal antibody treatments to COVID-19 patients and was one of only five hospitals in the state to receive the first round of the state's COVID-19 vaccine pilot program. Tampa General Hospital is on a mission to combat many other types of infectious diseases as well, including bacterial, viral, bone and fungal infections. With a state-of-the-art diagnostic laboratory and imaging facilities and the administration of on-site immunizations, Tampa General can efficiently diagnose and treat a variety of infectious diseases, while ensuring the best outcome for patients today.

ABOUT TAMPA GENERAL HOSPITAL

Tampa General Hospital, a 1,040-bed, not-for-profit, academic health system, is one of the largest hospitals in America and delivers world-class care as the region's only center for Level 1 trauma and comprehensive burn care. Tampa General Hospital is the highest-ranked hospital in the market in [U.S. News & World Report's](#) 2022-23 Best Hospitals, and is tied as the third highest-ranked hospital in Florida, with seven specialties ranking among the best programs in the United States. Tampa General Hospital has been designated as a model of excellence by the [2022 Fortune/Merative 100 Top Hospitals list](#). The academic health system's commitment to growing and developing its team members is recognized by two prestigious Forbes magazine rankings – first nationally in the 2022 [America's Best Employers for Women](#) and sixth out of 100 Florida companies in the 2022 [America's Best Employers by State](#). Tampa General is the safety net hospital for the region, caring for everyone regardless of their ability to pay, and in fiscal year 2021, provided a net community benefit worth more than \$224.5 million in the form of health care for underinsured patients, community education, and financial support to community health organizations in Tampa Bay. It is one of the nation's busiest adult solid organ transplant centers and is the primary teaching hospital for the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine. With six medical

helicopters, Tampa General Hospital transports critically injured or ill patients from 23 surrounding counties to receive the advanced care they need. Tampa General houses a nationally accredited comprehensive stroke center, and its 32-bed Neuroscience, Intensive Care Unit is the largest on the West Coast of Florida. It also is home to the Jennifer Leigh Muma 82-bed neonatal intensive care unit, and a nationally accredited rehabilitation center. Tampa General Hospital's footprint includes 17 Tampa General Medical Group Primary Care offices, TGH Family Care Center Kennedy, TGH Brandon Healthplex, TGH Virtual Health, and 21 [TGH Imaging powered by Tower](#) outpatient radiology centers throughout Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas and Palm Beach counties. Tampa Bay area residents also receive world-class care from the [TGH Urgent Care powered by Fast Track](#) network of clinics. To see a medical care professional live anytime, anywhere on a smartphone, tablet or computer, visit [Virtual Health | Tampa General Hospital \(tgh.org\)](#). As one of the largest hospitals in the country, Tampa General Hospital is the first in Florida to partner with GE Healthcare and open a clinical command center that provides real-time situational awareness to improve and better coordinate patient care at a lower cost. For more information, go to www.tgh.org.

ABOUT USF HEALTH

USF Health's mission is to envision and implement the future of health. It is the partnership of the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine, the College of Nursing, the College of Public Health, the Taneja College of Pharmacy, the School of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Sciences, the Biomedical Sciences Graduate and Postdoctoral Programs, and USF Health's multispecialty physicians' group. The University of South Florida is a high-impact global research university dedicated to student success. Over the past 10 years, no other public university in the country has risen faster in U.S. News &

World Report's national university rankings than USF. For more information, visit health.usf.edu.

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