

Family Embraces Mission of Taubman Medical Research Institute

WHEN A. ALFRED TAUBMAN first spoke with his family about his emerging passion for medical research less than a decade ago, it made sense to his daughter, Gayle Taubman Kalisman, president of the Taubman Foundation.

“Slowly, later in his life, medicine and health became the most important focus of his philanthropy,” she says. “Everything with Dad was very forward thinking and innovative, and he hated to see people suffering. He imagined a world in the future that could be pain-free.”

That vision led to what Taubman’s children say has become his defining philanthropic achievement — the 2007 founding of the A. Alfred Taubman Medical Research Institute at the University of Michigan. The institute today is a national force for high-risk, high-reward research, providing funding for groundbreaking work on a wide range of diseases, including: cancer, Alzheimer’s disease, and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease. Established with gifts totaling \$100 million from Taubman, the institute also is engaging other philanthropists who are drawn to its mission of providing clinician-scientists with flexible funding to pursue their most

far-reaching ideas for change.

“It was very important to my dad, and it gave him great joy on many levels,” says son William S. Taubman, chief operating officer and a director of Taubman Centers, Inc. “He was proud of the research that was done, and he was proud to have his name associated with the university. His vision was that through the efforts of the institute, scientists would have the capability to create new medications that would have immediate impact on people’s lives. That continues to be the institute’s great ambition.”

A. Alfred Taubman and founding institute director Eva L. Feldman (M.D. 1983, Ph.D. 1979, Fellowship 1988), the Russell N. DeJong Professor of Neurology at U-M, worked together to set up “an incredible paradigm,” Kalisman says. “Dad saw

that these doctors had a dual role in caring for patients and in leading their own research teams. So the quest toward new treatments and cures would be motivated by their interaction with their patients. He believed that the physicians were part of the solution. He told them that he wanted to fund the things that might be seen as ‘out of the box’ or not far enough along to secure traditional sources of grant funding.”

While the Taubman Medical Research Institute is part of an expansive legacy — at U-M alone, the A. Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, the A. Alfred Taubman Health Care Center, the A. Alfred Taubman Health Sciences Library and the A. Alfred Taubman Biomedical Science Research Building — it is central to

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Left to right: William Taubman; Gayle Taubman Kalisman; Alfred Taubman; Mary Sue Coleman, president emerita of the U-M and professor emerita of chemistry and of biological chemistry; and Robert Taubman at a 2008 dinner hosted in Alfred Taubman's honor.

how the family believes he will be remembered.

Taubman was a hands-on advisor at the institute and a politically active advocate for stem-cell research, in particular. His children are now dedicated to bringing a sense of continuity to the institute and to stewarding their father's commitment to medicine.

With A. Alfred Taubman's passing in April, Kalisman, a U-M alumna who served as co-chair of the institute with her father, and her brothers, William and Robert, who is chairman, president and CEO of Taubman Centers, will continue in leadership roles.

Being at U-M "is always a great learning experience for me," William

Taubman says. "I am amazed by the enthusiasm of everyone involved in the institute, the work the institute is funding and the hope that it will be productive to the future."

Some of Taubman's nine grandchildren already are showing an interest in the science and fundraising aspects of the mission. Both generations are honoring the many lessons Taubman taught them about helping others. "He was a Detroit, a Michigander, and he believed very strongly in the importance of giving back to your community," William Taubman says. "Having been blessed with the success that he had, he very much wanted to make a difference."

The family also will continue to encourage others to join them in

reaching the institute's goals, Kalisman says. "We're here, we're going to do everything we can, but we also need help. This work can change millions of people's lives. The implications of it to make a difference are just monumental. But it is something that has to grow to be the best that it can be."

When speaking at her father's funeral, Kalisman quoted a proverb: "A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in."

"My dad lived his life that way," she says. "He understood that he wasn't going to see the miracles or the discoveries, but he believed they were going to happen."

— MARGARETANN CROSS

Scholars, Friends Reflect on Taubman's Legacy

“Alfred's passion to invest in the physician scientists through the Taubman Institute was really very defining. He recognized that if we continue to invest in doctors who trained in science, they'll have a better chance in identifying mechanisms in disease and opportunities for therapy. He was deeply, deeply passionate about that. The thing about Alfred that was most unusual is that I watched him express this same passion as he interacted with the School of Architecture, the Detroit Institute of Arts, with Lawrence Tech, with the city of Detroit. This same yearning to make a difference through institutes of higher learning and art reflect the range and the depth of this man's commitment and knowledge. When he jumped in, he jumped in and stayed, and if he saw his gift was making difference, he didn't pull back from the throttle. He put his foot on the gas, and said 'Let's move this along more.' He cared for humanity, he cared for Detroit and he loved our university. There are very few people you meet with such a yearning to help our university, and it was a deep, daily passion for him. His eyes lit up with every advance he was part of. I really miss him.”

Kim Eagle, M.D.

*Albion Walter Hewlett Professor of Internal Medicine
Director of the Samuel and Jean Frankel
Cardiovascular Center
Professor of health management and policy*



A. Alfred Taubman

“Alfred was an inspirational man who was clearly focused on doing good for people. He took great interest in the science itself and regularly visited the lab to speak with our researchers about stem cells. I've never worked with a lay person who had such a keen interest in discovery and science and in using his resources to make a difference in people's lives. He was dedicated to that. He became a good friend over the years and was one of the most remarkable storytellers I ever met. Alfred's life was so full of adventure, and even in his later years, when he reached 90, he was so full of passion and enthusiasm. Every time I met with him, he was passionate about moving the science forward and his dedication was a real inspiration to those of us doing the research.”

Max Wicha, M.D.

*Madeline and Sidney Forbes Professor of Oncology
Founding Director Emeritus of the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center
Professor of internal medicine*

“Alfred Taubman, in his own words, hated to see others suffer and was determined to do something about it. And he was not a man to simply give money and hope for the best. He put his own time and energy on the line — whether on the public stage, lobbying for the legalization of stem cell research in Michigan, or privately, in advising and supporting the junior U-M Medical School faculty he believed to be the up-and-coming clinician-scientists of tomorrow. The source of Alfred's greatness lay in his bold, visionary ideas, his curiosity and his willingness to take risks that changed conventional thinking in every area he touched. The immeasurable benefits his support of medical research will bring to future generations are the legacy of his passion, his inspiration and his unmatched ability to achieve grand results. We greatly miss our mentor, our leader and our friend. But we are more determined than ever fulfill his mission to alleviate human suffering.”

Eva Feldman (M.D. 1983, Ph.D. 1979, Fellowship 1988)

*Russell N. DeJong Professor of Neurology
Director of the A. Alfred Taubman Medical Research Institute*

“Alfred was instrumental in supporting many capital improvements at the University of Michigan, most remarkably at the Medical School and the transformative new University Hospital that he assisted in making the case for building. While capital improvements marked much of what he helped advance at Michigan, the Taubman Institute was different. It wasn't a building or a structure. It was him understanding and believing that he could improve the human condition by using his funds and ability to motivate teams to move medical science forward. He told me that one of the things that gave him the most joy was knowing that we would eventually transform medicine through work based at the institute. I was lucky to know him and see how he touched so many people's lives. His legacy will be the discoveries that are made in the institute by the people supported to do this important work.”

Valerie Castle-Opipari, M.D. (Fellowship 1990)
Ravitz Foundation Endowed Professor of Pediatrics and Communicable Diseases
Chair of pediatrics and communicable diseases
Physician-in-Chief at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital

“Alfred Taubman appreciated the enormous challenge to translate innovation from the world of the laboratory to the world of patient care. In my own work, which focuses on the creation of brain-machine interface neuroprosthetic devices and brain pacemakers to cure neurological disease, his enthusiasm and generous support were both enabling and inspirational. Alfred always wanted to hear about our efforts to advance the field and, thanks to the support of the A. Alfred Taubman Medical Institute, there was much to share with him. His impact on our lives will be felt for many years to come.”

Parag Patil, M.D., Ph.D.
Associate professor of neurosurgery, of anesthesiology, of neurology and of biomedical engineering
Taubman Emerging Scholar

Professorships Recently Inaugurated

Endowed professorships, often made possible by the generosity of private individuals and foundations, are among the highest honors at the University of Michigan Medical School. Below is a list of professorships inaugurated from January through May 2015.

On March 9, two **Thomas H. Simpson Professorships** were established through funds from the Thomas H. Simpson endowment, presented by Christine McDonald Simpson as a memorial to her husband who died of pernicious anemia in 1923. **Ronald Buckanovich, M.D., Ph.D.** was inaugurated as the Thomas H. Simpson Collegiate Professor and **James Rae, Ph.D.**, became the Thomas H. Simpson Collegiate Professor of Cancer Research.

The **Milton and Carolyn Kevreson Research Professorship in Neurology** was established on March 11. It will promote research, teaching and clinical care in the field of Alzheimer's disease, which Carolyn Kevreson succumbed to in 2007. The endowment was made possible through a gift from the Kevreson's estate. **Hiroko Dodge, Ph.D.**, director of the Biostatistics

and Data Core of the Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Center, was installed as the first Kevreson Professor.

William Chey, M.D. (Fellowship 1993), was installed as the first **Timothy T. Nostrant, M.D., Collegiate Professor of Gastroenterology** on March 13. Established through gifts and funds from the Department of Internal Medicine, this professorship will honor Nostrant (Residency 1979), whose extraordinary contributions have advanced clinical work, research, administration and education at Michigan for over 36 years.

The **Richard and Norma Sarns Research Professorship in Cardiac Surgery** honors the Sarns' lasting contributions to the field of biomedical engineering. Made possible through a generous endow-

ment from the Sarns family, along with other donors including the Department of Cardiac Surgery, the professorship will support cardiac surgery research, clinical application and teaching. The first recipient, **Richard Prager, M.D.** (Residencies 1976 and 1978), director of the Samuel and Jean Frankel Cardiovascular Center, head of the Section of Adult Cardiac Surgery and Thoracic Surgery Residency Training Program director, was inaugurated on May 6.

The **Edward B. Diethrich, M.D., Professorship in Biomedical Engineering and Vascular Surgery** was established through a gift from Edward Diethrich (M.D. 1960) and his wife, Gloria Baldwin Diethrich. An internationally renowned cardiovascular surgeon, Diethrich is regarded as one of the world's pioneers in heart disease diagnosis and innovative cardiovascular and noninvasive endovascular treatments. In 1971, he opened the Arizona Heart Institute and Foundation in Phoenix. **Alberto Figueroa, Ph.D.**, was named the first Diethrich Professor in a May 18 ceremony.