

**TIME PLUS MONEY:** In fiscal year 2009, the DHMC Auxiliary contributed 56,000 volunteer hours at the Medical Center, in addition to raising \$260,000 for grants benefiting patient care initiatives and \$20,000 for earthquake relief in Haiti.



**Small foundations, big impacts** By Kate Villars

Mention private foundations, and those likely to come to mind for most people will be large, high-profile philanthropies like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, or the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Such organizations give hundreds of millions—even billions—of dollars to charitable causes each year.

But nationwide there are more than 75,000 private foundations, the vast majority of which are small grant-makers with few or no paid staff and whose giving ranges from less than \$100,000 to a few million dollars annually.

Despite their small size, the support of such foundations is felt throughout Dartmouth Medical School and Dartmouth-Hitchcock—in education, research, patient care, and community outreach. Though their grants may be relatively small, their impact can be significant.

**Effect is “huge”**

A case in point is the J.T. Tai & Company Foundation. Established in 1983 by the late Jun Tsei Tai, the owner of a real estate management company and an internationally renowned dealer in Asian art, the foundation primarily supports medical education and health care. The Tai Foundation has been a loyal donor to

DMS since 1996, providing a total of \$595,000 in scholarship aid. “Scholarship gifts are an incredible investment,” says G. Dino Koff, DMS’s director of financial aid. “Every dollar in scholarship aid lowers a student’s loans, and the long-term

**“Many smaller foundations recognize that they can have a lot of impact by supporting pilot-type studies,” explains DMS researcher James DiRenzo.**

effect of that is huge, considering the interest that accrues on a loan over 10 or 15 years. Our students are truly grateful.”

Many small foundations make a meaningful impact by focusing their philanthropy on a narrow area of interest. Such is the case with the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, which targets its giving in New Hampshire’s northernmost county, Coos County, and surrounding communities. For the past two and a half years, the Tillotson Fund has supported the North Country Palliative Care Collaboration—a highly successful initiative that is improving palliative care for the region’s aging population. Its grants to Dartmouth-Hitchcock, totaling \$300,000, are enabling the Section of Palliative Medicine to work with care providers in Littleton, Lancaster, Berlin, and Colebrook, N.H., and St. Johnsbury, Vt., to strengthen

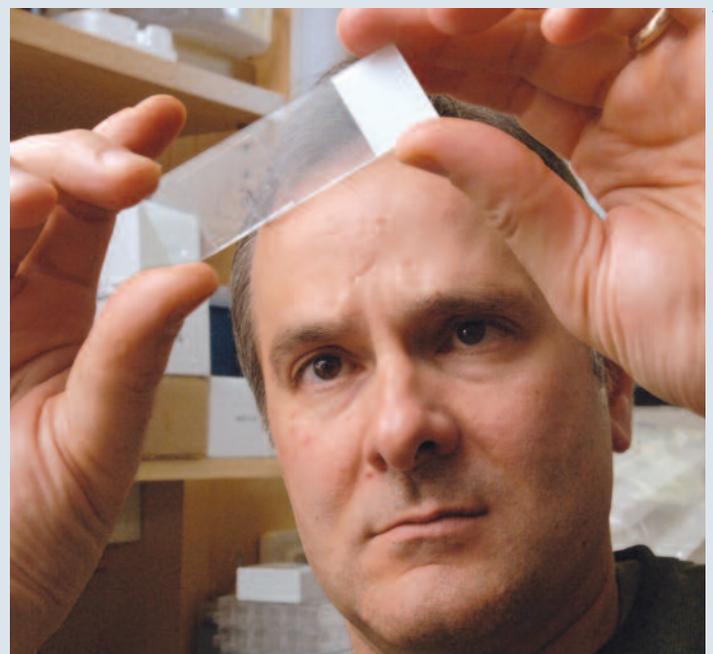
and expand hospice and palliative-care services for rural residents with advanced illness and their families.

In research, small foundations often fill a critically important niche. “Many smaller foundations recognize that they can have a lot of impact by supporting pilot-type stud-

ies, where you’ve got some preliminary results, but you need to generate a lot more data before you can apply for a bigger federal grant,” explains James DiRenzo, Ph.D., an associate

professor of pharmacology and toxicology at DMS and scientific director of the Comprehensive Breast Program at Dartmouth’s Norris Cotton Cancer Center. In January, DiRenzo received a \$163,000 grant from the Elsa U. Pardee Foundation. This foundation was created in 1944 upon the death of Mrs. Pardee, who provided \$1 million through her will “for the promotion of the control and cure of cancer.” Sixty-six years later, her initial bequest has provided an astonishing \$88 million in grants.

“I think some of the best publications that have come out of our lab have . . . originated with private foundation money,” says DiRenzo. “In my opinion, it’s a great return on their investment.”



JON GILBERT FOX

**DiRenzo, who has identified a protein that may be an indicator for a deadly form of breast cancer, recently received funding from the Pardee Foundation.**

MARK WASHBURN



Donnenfeld, a leader in ophthalmology, chairs his class's reunion gift committee.

**Enduring connections** By Kate Villars

DMS alumnus Eric Donnenfeld knew from a young age that he wanted to be an ophthalmologist. His fascination with the eye began as a boy, when his father—a physician—helped him to dissect a pig's eye given to him by a neighboring farmer on Long Island. "I was seven years old, and I knew all the parts of the eye," he says.

Almost 50 years later, Donnenfeld is still excited about his chosen field. "There's nothing more rewarding than visually rehabilitating somebody and restoring their vision," he says. "It's one of the most satisfying things you can do with your life."

A pioneer in laser vision correction surgery, Donnenfeld credits DMS with launching him on his rewarding career. "As I look back at the seminal events of my life, I have to say that the training I received at DMS really made me the physician that I am today," says Donnenfeld, a Dartmouth College graduate and a member of the DMS Class of 1980.

"My professors at DMS had a deep commitment to teaching and helping us become the best physicians we could be."

He went on to do specialty training in cornea and refractive surgery. As a principal investigator in the trials that led to FDA approval of laser vision correction surgery in the 1990s, he was among the first physicians anywhere to per-

**"The camaraderie of DMS is something that I've carried with me" for 25 years, says Donnenfeld.**

form the procedure. He continues to practice at Ophthalmic Consultants of Long Island, where he is a founding partner, and is also a clinical professor of ophthalmology at New York University.

The relationships Donnenfeld forged at DMS have shaped his personal as well as his professional life. It was during a pediatric rotation at DHMC that he met and began dating an intern named Marleen Brajer. This year, they will

*The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn.*

—*Essayist and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)*

celebrate 28 years of marriage.

"DMS is a place that fosters friendships and relationships," says Donnenfeld. "I had relationships with faculty that were extraordinarily close. Many of my best friends are my medical school classmates. The camaraderie of DMS is something that I've carried with me during the last 25 years."

Donnenfeld still maintains close ties to the Medical School, giving back to DMS in many ways. He has been a member of its Board of Overseers since 2004. He has also served as a class agent and this year is again chairing the Class of 1980 Reunion Gift Committee. A loyal and generous donor himself, Donnenfeld expects to lead his class to besting the record in reunion giving that it set five years ago. "This is a chance for us to make a statement that we real-

ly appreciate everything DMS has done for us," he says.

Much of his own giving has been unrestricted. "My view is that I'm going to put my trust in the people of DMS to use the funds I donate wisely," explains Donnenfeld, who is one of the top donors to the Fund for DMS. "Serving on the Board of Overseers, I'm privileged to see how the administration works, and I like what they're doing. DMS is a world-class medical school."

**Click, click, give**

As the Fund for DMS and the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Annual Fund race toward the finish of their fiscal year on June 30, more donors are choosing to give online. The number of online annual fund gifts is up 30% over last year, and dollars contributed online are up more than 50%. To learn more, click on [www.DMSNet.org/Donate](http://www.DMSNet.org/Donate) or [www.Dartmouth-Hitchcock.org/DHAF](http://www.Dartmouth-Hitchcock.org/DHAF).

**Dollars for scholars**

Students graduating from DMS this year are leaving with an average of \$109,000 in medical school debt—well below the national average of \$150,000 for graduates of private medical schools. To cover the annual tuition and fees of \$47,000, 84% of DMS M.D. students



must take out loans.

And roughly 50% receive scholarship aid, based on need—thanks to donors who have made gifts to scholarship endowments or current-use funds.