

## \$5-million gift to Cancer Center is an act of faith

An Episcopal minister and his wife recently committed \$5 million to Dartmouth's Norris Cotton Cancer Center. The pledge is, in effect, an expression of faith in the future of cancer research and care at Dartmouth.

"In my generation, cancer was the dreaded word . . . the kiss of death," says the Reverend Preston "Pete" Kelsey, a 1958 graduate of Dartmouth College. He made the commitment with his wife, Virginia Rice "Winkie" Kelsey. But thanks to "extraordinary advances," adds Pete Kelsey, "cancer doesn't have quite the fearful impact that it had in the 1950s, '60s, '70s, or '80s. That's the dramatic fruit," he says, of the kind of research that takes place at Norris Cotton.

**Chair:** The Kelseys' gift will establish an endowment to support the director of the Cancer Center, currently Dr. Mark Israel, and his work guiding Norris Cotton's hundreds of clinicians and scientists. In establishing the Preston T. and Virginia R. Kelsey Distinguished Chair in Cancer,

the Kelseys have made a strong statement in support of Israel and his leadership.

**Cells:** "One thing that impressed both my wife and myself," says Kelsey, "was the layout of the [Cancer Center], which reflects [Israel's] philosophy of individual scientists not working in their individual cells, but coming together and putting their heads together around issues, problems, research."

The Cancer Center's research space, which Israel helped design, incorporates details aimed at fostering interaction—such as open-concept labs, strategically placed white boards, and glass-walled break rooms.

"It's when interchange takes place that relationships move forward," says Kelsey, who began his career at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Hanover, N.H., and then spent many years as a parish priest in California. "One of the theologies that I've always adhered to is the theology of exchange," he says, which "can be an encounter between one person and another person, or an encounter with God."

The Kelseys, who again live in Hanover, chose to support the Cancer Center because they believe that having "such

a first-rate research and training center" in rural New England is important to the region. (The Kelseys' past philanthropy has included establishing endowments at Dartmouth College's Tucker Foundation, Hood Museum of Art, and Hopkins Center for the Performing Arts. Virginia Kelsey is a noted sculptor and an instructor at the AVA Gallery in Lebanon, N.H.)

Gifts such as the Kelseys' allow an organization "to grow and expand in ways that it couldn't otherwise," explains Brian Lally, vice president for development at DMS and DHMC. "Endowment is a huge part of the funding for academic medicine," says Lally. It not only offers a buffer against swings in outside funding but, he adds, provides the "run for daylight' opportunistic dollars for bright new ideas that have yet to gain maturity."

**Campaign:** Including the Kelseys' gift, commitments to the Transforming Medicine Campaign for DMS and DHMC have now reached \$111 million. The campaign aims to raise \$250 million for the Medical School and Medical Center by 2009.

"I am honored and enormously grateful," says Israel of being the first incumbent in the Kelsey Chair. "All donor support is critically important in allowing us to further our mission, but this tangible expression of faith . . . is hugely significant in inspiring our talented staff and as a recognition that all our work reflects our commitment to this community and the patients for whom we provide care."

JENNIFER DURGIN



Israel, right, will hold the chair named for the Kelseys, left.

## THEN & NOW

A reminder of the pace of change, and of timeless truths, from the 1983 Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital annual report:

"Who could have foreseen . . . stopping a beating heart to repair it!"

— Medical Director  
Louis Matthews, M.D.

**\$844,640**

Philanthropic donations to MHMH in FY1983 (compared to \$24,637,591 to DHMC in FY2005)

**181,387**

Outpatient visits in 1982-83 (compared to 1.6 million in FY2004)



"I was born at Mary Hitchcock Hospital and . . . recall Donation Day, when people gave produce and canned goods to the Hospital for the winter."

— Hanover resident  
Nancy Mitchell