



Jon Gilbert Fox

HONORING WENNBERG AND SUPPORTING FUTURE PIONEERS

Chris McKown, George Bennett, and Kevin Kimberlin—who, together, led the fundraising campaign to support the distinguished professorship—are pictured here (left to right) with Jack Wennberg (center), Dartmouth President Phil Hanlon (second from the right), and Elliott Fisher (far right).

LIKE MANY PIONEERS, DR. JOHN “JACK” WENNBERG ENCOUNTERED RESISTANCE. In 1973, he and Dr. Alan Gittelsohn published a landmark paper in *Science*, documenting unwarranted geographic variations in health care. Their paper revealed that much of what doctors do was based less on science than on professional opinion and the capacity of the local health-care system. It took decades for those provocative findings—and the research of dozens of colleagues whom Wennberg inspired—to become broadly accepted by the medical community. Today, Wennberg and the faculty of The Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice (TDI), which he founded, are internationally known for their influence on health-care policy and research.

To honor Wennberg and further the pioneering work of The Dartmouth Institute, Dartmouth College will establish the John E. Wennberg Distinguished Professorship. Made possible by the generosity of 26 donors, the distinguished professorship will provide a stable source of funding to enable one of TDI’s most senior professors to freely pursue research, teaching, and other academic

activities aimed at advancing health-care research and evaluation and informing health policy.

“Jack’s work started the national discussion about health-care delivery quality and efficiency,” says Geisel Dean Chip Souba, “and it continues to help shape current health-care reform efforts in America.”

The rigor, persistence, and healthy skepticism with which Wennberg and



Top Honors

Endowed professorships are the highest honor awarded to faculty members and a powerful tool for recruiting and retaining faculty who are superb clinicians, master educators, and accomplished researchers. Such individuals attract the most talented students and junior faculty and ensure the ongoing excellence of education and research at Geisel.

Creating more endowed professorships is a key fundraising priority for the Medical School. Support from alumni and friends is vital to achieving that goal. Thank you to all those who contributed to the John E. Wennberg Distinguished Professorship.

his colleagues asked important and challenging questions about health care are embedded in the culture of TDI today.

“Our faculty consists of highly engaged, smart people who are asking tough questions about health care, devising creative solutions to our problems, and educating current and future leaders in health care,” says Elliott Fisher, who now directs TDI and was mentored by Wennberg. The Institute’s work focuses on three main areas: evaluating health care at both the population and individual patient levels; engaging and empowering patients through informed choice; and testing and spreading new models of care in communities and at the health-system level.

“This professorship is the perfect way to honor Jack,” says Fisher, “because it will support future generations of health-policy researchers who will follow in Jack’s footsteps and dedicate themselves to improving our health-care system.”

JENNIFER DURGIN