

Medical College of Wisconsin: Milwaukee-area family invests \$10 million in genomic sciences and precision medicine research

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Milwaukee, May 6, 2022 – The Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) has dedicated its [Genomic Sciences and Precision Medicine Center](#) as the Linda T. and John A. Mellowes Center for Genomic Sciences and Precision Medicine in honor of the couple's \$10 million gift to support new research and for MCW faculty studying the potential the human genome has to treat a wide variety of diseases.

The gift is the largest philanthropic investment in the genomic sciences received by MCW, and establishes three new endowed chairs in precision oncology, precision medicine, and bioinformatics and data analytics. Additionally, an endowed innovation and discovery fund will support the center's strategic research objectives.

"John and I are thrilled to make this gift, which we see as an investment in the future of medicine," said Linda Mellowes. "We feel confident that the work of the center will attract intellectual talent to our region and lead to medical breakthroughs and new treatments for patients and families."

"We are deeply grateful to Linda and John for their generosity and for the trust this gift represents in our work as researchers and clinicians," said Raul Urrutia, MD, director of the Mellowes Center and the Warren P. Knowles Chair of Genomics and Precision Medicine. "As we seek to transform how patients are diagnosed and

treated, we are proud to have them as partners.”

Since the human genome was first sequenced in 2003, the promise of tailoring specific treatments to an individual’s genetic traits has accelerated new research into a broad array of disease states, including cancer. Razelle Kurzrock, MD, FACP, associate director of clinical research for the MCW Cancer Center and associate director of precision oncology at the Mellowes Center has been appointed as the inaugural holder of the Linda T. and John A. Mellowes Endowed Chair of Precision Oncology to advance her research in cancer, including rare cancers.

“When leading scientists and clinicians are considering whether to join an institution, they look carefully at the support from the community for the work being done there,” said Dr. Kurzrock. “Philanthropy truly propels innovative research and makes it possible for us to deliver potentially life-saving new treatments to patients who need them.”

MCW and its clinical partners, Froedtert Hospital and Children’s Wisconsin have a strong record of achievements in the genomic sciences, dating back to the Human Genome Project and the 1999 founding of the MCW Human and Molecular Genetics Center. In 2010, MCW became the first institution in the world to deploy genetic sequencing to diagnose and recommend a treatment for a rare pediatric disease.

Today, under Dr. Urrutia’s leadership, the Mellowes Center focuses on a number of disease states, including expanding efforts to understand, diagnose and treat undiagnosed and rare diseases. This program, led by Donald Basel, MD, associate director of the Mellowes Center and a professor in the Department of Pediatrics, has been recognized for its excellence by the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD), and is a testimonial to the contributions MCW and its health care partners are making to advance health in Wisconsin.

Linda Mellowes joined the MCW Board of Trustees in 1994, served as board chair from 2008 to 2010, and led the search committee that recruited John R. Raymond, Sr., MD as president and CEO of MCW. She has also served as a board member of Medical College Physicians, the largest healthcare practice in the state.

Previously the Mellowes endowed a chair for the MCW Department of Medicine and launched MCW's Women's Health Research Program in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology with their own gifts and by generating support from other community leaders.

The couple moved from Washington, D.C. in 1970 to continue the leadership by the Mellowes family of Charter Manufacturing, a steel and iron production and manufacturing company founded in the 1930s. Their sons, John and Charles, run the company today, and John's wife, R. Pirozzolo-Mellowes is a current member of the MCW Board of Trustees.

"We truly hope our gift will inspire others to recognize the incredible work being done at MCW and Froedtert Hospital, said Linda. "The research-based healthcare we have access to in our community is world-class and worthy of our support."