



Whittemore family supports excellence in medical research

Founded by Annette '74 (elementary education/special education) and Harvey Whittemore '74 (prelegal), the Whittemore Family Foundation has been a long-time friend of the University of Nevada, Reno, providing major gifts to the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, the Whittemore Peterson Institute for Neuro-Immune Disease, the Robert and Leslie Whittemore Athletics Scholarship Endowment and many other campus projects.

The Whittemores firmly believe that a strong university creates a strong community. "We are privileged to live in Nevada and it's our goal to work for and support our University, which does so much for so many people in northern Nevada," Annette says. "Both Harvey and I were awarded scholarships to the University of Nevada, Reno and they really helped us get through our college years. We feel blessed to be in a position to provide scholarships and help build facilities that will assist the next generation."

The new Center for Molecular Medicine—currently under construction on the north side of campus—will expand the

The Center for Molecular Medicine/Whittemore Peterson Institute is expected to be ready for occupancy in Fall 2010.

University's research capabilities in cancer and other diseases, as well as house the Whittemore Peterson Institute headquarters. "The institute will have a significant impact on students and faculty at Nevada," explains Annette, who is currently the institute's president and director. "We have already brought a group of researchers together to begin to develop an increased expertise in this field of medicine. The institute also plans to help medical students enrolled in our state's medical school system by giving them first-hand experience in the institute's medical practice, which will be led by experts in this field, such as Dr. Daniel Peterson. Students will learn how to evaluate and treat patients, while gaining a better understanding of these complex diseases."

The Whittemores are excited about bringing campus medical researchers together in one central facility. "We haven't had a new research building on campus in more than 20 years," Annette notes. "University scientists are currently scattered all across campus, and that often makes it very difficult for effective communication to occur."

Effective communication, especially between scientist and clinician, is the cornerstone of translational research—the translation of scientific discovery into improvements in human health. The National Institutes of Health dubs this type

of research "bench-to-bedside." The basic research done in a laboratory, i.e., "at the bench" at the cellular or molecular level, is then taken to the patient in a clinical setting, i.e., "bedside." NIH has placed a high priority on translational research, and funding opportunities will be tied to projects that have translational research components, she adds.

"We believe the University and the Whittemore Peterson Institute can develop expertise in the field of neuro-immune diseases that will become world-renowned, and will not only help thousands of Nevadans, but millions around the world," she says. "As pioneers in a collaborative effort, this project brings a great opportunity to the University."

Both Annette and Harvey were raised to believe that philanthropy is important. Harvey says, "As parents, we know that setting good examples is an important part of parenting. Students at the University need good examples of people giving back of their time and talents."

Nevada alumni are giving back in large numbers, demonstrating both the affection they hold for the University and their stellar leadership in ensuring that it will continue providing a world-class education far into the future.

—Ken Kempcke

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