DESTINATION TRANSFORMATION

how the CAMPAIGN FOR UAB WILL CHANGE EVERYTHING
In June 2012, five years after she was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer at the UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center, Lessley Hynson threw a party. The guest list included doctors, nurses, CT scan technicians—“anybody who had anything to do with my care,” says Hynson. She had beat heavy odds to make it so far; only 5 percent of patients with pancreatic cancer reach the five-year milestone.

“T’ve aware of how few people survive, and it still surprises me all the time that I made it,” says Hynson, who credits UAB surgeon Martin Heslin, M.D.—and an experimental vaccine treatment she received at the Cancer Center—for her success. “T’ve very blessed.” Hynson is already planning her 10-year bash, but she is also gearing up for an even bigger party “when the cancer cure is here.”

Hynson is doing all she can to hasten that day. “UAB has given me life,” she says. “T’ve least I can do is give as much of my life and abilities back as I can.” In the past five years, she has helped raise around $150,000 for UAB pancreatic cancer research through the Robert E. Reed Gastrointestinal Oncology Research Foundation. “My goal is to raise enough money to fund one researcher every year,” Hynson says. She has had the chance to meet many scientists working at the Cancer Center, and their dedication “is overwhelming,” she says. “They are committed to finding a cure for cancer, and I think it is going to happen at UAB.”

PASSION AND ACTION

“Whatever you are passionate about, whatever you think needs to be accomplished in Birmingham—whether that is curing a disease, breathing new life into a neglected neighborhood, giving a teen a chance
WILL CHANGE EVERYTHING

at a better future, or inspiring new creative breakthroughs—it can be done here at UAB,” says Shirley Salloway Kahn, Ph.D., UAB vice president for development, alumni, and external relations.

Those big dreams are the inspiration for The Campaign for UAB: Give Something, Change Everything, the university's largest fundraising campaign to date, with an ambitious goal of $1 billion through 2018. Accomplishing great things requires a blend of passion and strong partnerships, says UAB President Ray L. Watts, M.D. “The scope and impact of this campaign will extend far beyond our campus,” Watts explains. “A successful fundraising effort of this scale will reap vastly improved health care, educational opportunities, and quality of life, as well as robust economic development, throughout our community, state, nation, and beyond. This will be a campaign with a truly global impact.”

UAB’s first philanthropic campaign, which took place from 1999 to 2003, set a goal of $350 million, at the time the largest ever undertaken by an Alabama university, and ended up raising more than $388 million. The new campaign is similarly ambitious.

“We’re throwing the ball long,” says Johnny Johns, co-chair of The Campaign for UAB and CEO and president of Protective Life Corporation. “I think that by asking for a billion dollars, we’re sending a strong signal that this is very important. I see the impact UAB has every day on the lives of people in this community, whether it is the world-class care in the medical center or the educational opportunities for students or the cultural amenities for the entire community. And we are only in the early stages of the UAB story. Just imagine what a billion dollars will do for UAB and for this community. What could that next chapter look like?”

“It will truly be transformative,” says Theresa Bruno, president of THB Inc., board president of UAB’s Alys Stephens Performing Arts Center, and a co-chair of The Campaign for UAB. “A billion dollars is a big number, but I love the challenge,” Bruno says. “This is an amazing town, and it wants to do great things. This campaign will help us do those things.”

The first time he heard the campaign’s billion-dollar goal, “I thought somebody was crazy,” says Mike Warren, president and CEO of Children’s of Alabama and the third co-chair of The Campaign for UAB. “Then I thought a second time and said, ‘Why not a billion dollars? Why should UAB be anything other than the top of the heap?’ The dollars given to UAB multiply throughout our economy. A gift to UAB is actually an investment in our future.”

CASE STUDIES IN CHANGE In the following pages, see how gifts to UAB are accelerating a cure for Parkinson’s disease, funding the dreams of students, and fueling the arts.

FOSTER RESEARCH INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT through research acceleration, drug discovery, innovation, and economic enrichment.

ADVANCE FACULTY EXCELLENCE with a focus on recruitment and retention, and a goal of doubling endowed chairs and professorships.
In July 2005, after months of troubling symptoms, inconclusive tests, and incomplete answers, Ken Cater finally received the definitive diagnosis he wanted—and the answer he dreaded. Cater, like actor Michael J. Fox, had early-onset Parkinson’s disease.

“I went into that spot where you don’t like to go and had my moment and cried on the sofa with my dog and family,” says Cater, an executive at SSOE Group, a global engineering firm. “After that I didn’t look back. I’m an engineer. I’m used to having a problem, finding a solution, and moving on.”

Cater arranged a meeting with Ray L. Watts, M.D., an international expert on Parkinson’s disease who was then chair of the UAB Department of Neurology and is now the university’s president. “I said, ‘What can I do to help?’” Cater recalls. Watts said his top priority was recruiting David Standaert, M.D., Ph.D., to UAB from Harvard University. “Dr. Watts said, ‘He’s the best there is, and I want to get him here,’” says Cater. “I responded, ‘What do we have to do to make that happen?’”

Cater’s financial support, along with Watts’s vision for a new kind of research program, helped convince Standaert to come to Birmingham to lead the UAB Center for Neurodegeneration and Experimental Therapeutics, known as CNET. The center’s mission is “to accelerate progress,” Standaert explains. “Dr. Watts and I are both physicians, and we’ve been treating patients with Parkinson’s and other diseases for a long time. We work with patients every day who are desperate for a cure, and we really felt there was a need for a group that would try to move this agenda forward, to take the discoveries going on in the lab and turn them into therapies.”

To attain that goal, Standaert launched his own recruiting drive. In seven years, CNET has grown “from just me to 50 scientists, students, postdocs, and staff,” Standaert says. “And we’re still recruiting.”
“Philanthropy is how we grow,” explains Standaert. “Dr. Watts and I have been very firm on this point: We don’t use it for operating expenses. Philanthropy is our tool to expand.”

CNET researchers have contributed to an explosion in Parkinson’s discoveries, says Standaert, who is now chair of the Department of Neurology. “The amount we’ve learned in the past five years exceeds everything we knew from the previous 200 years.”

CNET is a major participant in the Alabama Drug Discovery Alliance (ADDA), a partnership among UAB, Southern Research Institute, and the Birmingham Business Alliance that is designed to speed the translation of UAB discoveries into clinic-ready treatments. CNET researchers already have two promising drug compounds. Standaert says. Andrew West, Ph.D., is testing a compound that inhibits LRRK2, “a molecule closely related to Parkinson’s,” Standaert explains, while Erik Roberson, M.D., Ph.D., is studying several molecules that could impact Alzheimer’s disease. (Roberson and West are now co-directors of CNET.) “Within a matter of months, we have moved these much farther than many places could have done in years,” Standaert says. (For more on new discoveries in the ADDA drug pipeline, see “Discovery Zone,” page 9.)

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

The recruitment of West and Roberson, Standaert emphasizes, would not have been possible without philanthropic giving. “Dr. West is supported by John Jurenko through a very generous gift that not only founded his lab but has endowed his position,” Standaert says. “Dr. Roberson is one of the top Alzheimer’s disease researchers in the country. A lot of places wanted to have him, but Virginia and Bill Spencer created an endowment that helped us land him here.” In fact, “almost all of the major faculty recruitments we have done have been based on philanthropic gifts,” Standaert says.

Philanthropic gifts have become particularly important as the nation’s research funding environment has changed in recent years, Standaert says. “The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has contracted what they are willing to do. They are not taking any risks because they have such limited funds. If you have a new idea and you want it to move quickly, the way you do that is through research acceleration funds—philanthropic gifts that enable us to launch projects, get them moving, and then go out and seek federal or industry funding to carry them forward to the conclusion.”

The Parkinson’s Association of Alabama (PAA), currently led by Cater, has played a role in several major recruitments for CNET, including the next generation of promising researchers, Standaert says. Talene Yacoubian, M.D., Ph.D., came to UAB from Harvard University in 2012 as the first Parkinson’s Association of Alabama Scholar in Parkinson’s Research. The PAA “supported her lab and transition costs and has helped launch her research,” Standaert says.

The PAA’s initial $100,000 investment allowed Yacoubian to receive an $800,000 NIH grant, Cater notes. “That’s an amazing rate of return, any way you look at it,” he says. Funding from the PAA has also helped encourage graduate students to enter the Parkinson’s field. “We have a lot of students at UAB who would like to get involved in this research, but finding support for them is not always that easy,” Standaert says. “So the PAA has stepped up with philanthropic funding that has let us go out and bring in the top students and put them to work on Parkinson’s disease here in the lab.”

“If we change the life and outlook of even one person, it’s worth every dollar,” Cater says. But he is optimistic that CNET research will change many more lives. “I believe we have the tools in place in Alabama and at UAB to solve the problem of Parkinson’s disease.”

TO LEARN MORE about drug discovery efforts at UAB, see “Discovery Zone,” page 9.
Action Figures

TURNING SCHOLARSHIPS INTO SUCCESS STORIES

There doesn’t seem to be enough time in the day, but somehow Alicja Foksinka gets everything done. The UAB junior is working toward a double major in business management—with a concentration in business administration—and information systems. She has a part-time job and an internship in the Office for Youth of the Diocese of Birmingham, the third internship she has held in her three years at UAB.

She also is helping Keri Larson, Ph.D., assistant professor of marketing, investigate how nursing units respond to new technology. Although she is interested in a career in academia, Foksinka also wants to help nonprofits streamline their business practices to save time and money, and she dreams of starting a foundation to help parents of children with special needs. She sums up her career goal in six words: “I want to change the world.”

Foksinka is exactly the kind of talented, passionate student that schools dream of recruiting. “I did a lot of research on colleges,” she says. She came to UAB largely because of the business school’s close connections to the Birmingham business community. “There are so many opportunities to do co-ops, internships, and volunteering here,” she says. Another advantage: an Opportunities in Business Scholarship, “which gave me an opportunity to learn without the worry in the back of my head that I would be in debt.”

Foksinka’s scholarship, like the School of Business, has a new name. In recognition of a $25 million gift from longtime supporters, the school is now the Charles and Patsy Collat School of Business, UAB’s first named school. Charles Collat, former CEO of Birmingham’s Mayer Electric Supply Company, “wants to create a legacy based on helping others succeed,” says Dean Eric Jack, Ph.D. “He believes that investing $25 million in the School of Business is the highest return he can get on his money.” The first tangible result of that investment, Jack explains, is the expansion of the Opportunities in Business Scholarship, which aims to recruit high-achieving, underrepresented students to the school. It has been renamed the Collat Scholars Program.

“I like to support institutions that cater to the whole community, and UAB does that,” Collat says. “My family and I have worked extremely hard to be in a position to help others, and very few entities are in a position to make as broad a positive impact as UAB.”

It would be difficult to find a portion of campus that hasn’t been touched by Charles and Patsy Collat. They contributed to the Business-Engineering Complex, which houses two of UAB’s schools. Their gift launched UAB’s industrial distribution program in the 1980s. The Collats have also founded two successful preschool education initiatives at the School of Education, endowed a chair in the Department of Neurosurgery, contributed to UAB Athletics and the Center for Palliative...
Creative Investments: THE POWER OF PLANNED GIVING

JOE GORDON SAW THE VALUE of UAB’s Palliative Care Program during the passing of a close friend with cancer. “Immediately I recognized this program as a way to meet the many important needs of the patient and the family at that very important time of life,” says Gordon, a Birmingham businessman.

Gordon decided to meet those needs in his own way by establishing a charitable remainder trust through his will. “Providing this type of care now and securing its place in the future during times of immense change is especially powerful,” says Rodney Tucker, M.D., director of the Center for Palliative and Supportive Care. “Our staff and our future patients and families are the true beneficiaries.”

“Many people would like to fund a life-changing investment in UAB, but are unaware of all the possibilities available through planned gifts,” says Elizabeth Ponder, director of planned giving. In addition to outright gifts of cash, stock, or real estate, a donor can leverage insurance policies, real estate, and other assets to provide an immediate impact or ensure a continued legacy after their lifetime.

Charles and Patsy Collat, longtime UAB donors, recently made a $25-million commitment to name the School of Business using a combination of cash, stock, life insurance policies, and more. “It has come from several directions,” Charles Collat says. “I had some good financial advisors, and I listened to them.” To learn more about planned giving at UAB, call (205) 996-7533 or send an e-mail to plannedgiving@uab.edu.

LEGACY BUILDING Students at the UAB Collat School of Business (including Alicja Foksinka, second from right) greet Charles Collat (left) at a ceremony celebrating the school’s new name.

and Supportive Care, and supported research and patient care efforts in AIDS, surgery, ophthalmology, and cancer.

Collat says he is particularly gratified with the success of the industrial distribution program at the School of Business, the only program in the Southeast preparing students for the booming career field. “Every student who has graduated from that program has gotten a good job,” Collat says. He is also excited about the school’s prominent role in campuswide initiatives such as the Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, which aims to commercialize UAB-developed technologies and prepare a new generation of business leaders.

Whether it is starting unique academic programs or launching new businesses, “UAB is defining success not just in terms of what’s good for the campus, but what’s good for the city,” Jack says. “We’re focused on moving this community forward.”
Judy Abroms has a dream. A mother is driving through the UAB campus with her daughter, a high school senior. As they ride down 10th Avenue, “all of a sudden, the student looks around and says, ‘Mom, what’s that?’” Abroms says. “The mother replies, ‘That’s the Institute for Visual Arts.’ And her daughter says, ‘Gosh, I want to go there.’”

The desire to create a “transformational experience” that could reshape UAB’s campus and attract new generations of students led Judy and Hal Abroms, along with their longtime friends Marvin and Ruth Engel, to make the lead gift to fund the Abroms-Engel Institute for Visual Arts (AEIVA), which opened in January 2014.

“I don’t think we can be a great university without having a strong liberal arts program on campus,” says Hal Abroms. “If we want to really get UAB to that highest level, we have to have a complete university, and that’s what we’re doing with the Institute for Visual Arts. We think this facility is going to attract students who are already here, as well as those who are thinking about coming here. If we can provide a spark and make it possible for students to reach their potential, I just think that’s awesome.”

The 26,000-square-foot AEIVA includes studio laboratories and classrooms for art history, time-based media, and graphic design students. Its three gallery spaces have state-of-the-art security and environmental systems to showcase works from UAB’s permanent collection—including a Pablo Picasso lithograph, Polaroids by Andy Warhol, and an Anthony Caro paper sculpture—and attract new loan opportunities from museums around the world. An outdoor sculpture garden provides another exhibit space.

“The importance of the arts on any campus, regardless of its focus, is that they bring perspective,” says Robert Palazzo, Ph.D., dean of the UAB College of Arts and Sciences. “They are a powerful form of self-discovery, teaching us how to observe and discover the world around us. Without the arts, I don’t think people can be whole.” The AEIVA will attract interest from the community as well as students, Palazzo says. “Our dream is to bring people in touch with world-class art—art that is making us think about who we are and what we represent.”

Arts and culture are an important but often underappreciated facet of business development for Birmingham as well, says Johnny Johns, president and CEO of Protective Life Corporation and a co-chair of The Campaign for UAB. Protective Life “competes for talent all over the United States, and the strong arts and cultural communities that we have in this city are a strong selling point,” Johns says.

By investing in the arts, “you are creating opportunities for your children and grandchildren,” says Theresa Bruno, board president of the Alys Stephens Center and a co-chair of The Campaign for UAB. “We now have in Birmingham the kinds of venues and opportunities to experience art and culture that we used to think we had to travel to find.”

“The arts define a city,” Abroms agrees. “Birmingham has the Alabama Symphony, the Birmingham Museum of Art, the Alys Stephens Center, and now the Institute for Visual Arts. I’ve met professors who have been recruited from places like Harvard and Johns Hopkins, and everyone I talk to is excited about living in Birmingham.”
Students in the Department of Theatre take the show on the road to schools, community centers, and more in a nine-county area.

UAB’s Cultural Arts District enriches the community—and plays a vital role in recruiting world-class talent to Alabama.

ART HOUSE The Abroms-Engel Institute for the Visual Arts includes studios, classrooms, state-of-the-art galleries, and an outdoor sculpture garden.
Some 20 promising compounds are being developed by researchers at UAB and Southern Research Institute as part of the Alabama Drug Discovery Alliance (ADDA). Here are three:

**LRRK2 inhibitors**

**Investigator:** Andrew West, Ph.D., associate professor of neurology and neurobiology, John A. and Ruth R. Jurenko Endowed Professor in Neurology

**How it works:** Most patients with Parkinson’s disease (PD) are still treated with a 42-year-old drug call L-DOPA, which only temporarily limits tremor, rigidity, and other symptoms. LRRK2 inhibitors work to counter the inflammation and nerve cell death causing those symptoms. “The next step is to find the best drugs that inactivate LRRK2 to see what kind of benefit people with Parkinson’s disease might expect,” West says.

**Potential:** “We will be publishing soon one of our lead series of drugs that we believe is better on many levels than any other drug candidates discovered for LRRK2 by the other companies and universities also working on LRRK2,” West says. “We believe we have even better drug candidates right around the corner.”

**CD38 inhibitors**

**Investigator:** Frances Lund, Ph.D., chair, Department of Microbiology

**How it works:** CD38 is an enzyme that seems to protect cells from oxidative stress. Elevated CD38 levels work at cross purposes with chemotherapy, which induces oxidative stress to damage the DNA of cancer cells and cause them to self-destruct. CD38 is over-expressed in several kinds of cancers, particularly B cell lymphomas such as leukemia and multiple myeloma that often affect older patients. These patients also often have adverse reactions to chemotherapy that are so bad the treatments are intolerable.

**Potential:** “Right now we don’t have very good ways of making chemo more easily tolerated,” Lund says. “If you can give someone another pill along with the chemo and make the chemo easier while still achieving the same goal of tumor cells, that would be great.”

Besides other cancers, a basically reverse use of CD38 could possible lead to drugs for autoimmune illnesses which now have few options. “The sort of inflammatory processes that you see in autoimmune diseases that cause tissue damage, tissue necrosis, beta cell death in juvenile diabetes and others are often based in very similar mechanisms.” In those diseases, the research would look for ways to enhance CD38 to boost cells’ protection from oxidative stress and therefore cell death.

**Cytochrome C oxidase inhibitors**

**Investigator:** Corinne E. Grigeur, Ph.D., associate professor, Division of Neurosurgery

**How it works:** Glioblastoma multiforme is so lethal because its cells quickly become resistant to treatment. Grigeur’s previous research found that the enzyme Cytochrome C oxidase was abundant in cells resistant to therapy. Patients who have an overactive version of the gene responsible for making Cytochrome C oxidase live less than half as long as patients with a less active version.

**Potential:** At this point, finding a drug that can inhibit Cytochrome C oxidase may only increase survival by six months, “but six months is significant to people” with the disease,” Grigeur says. Her team is now evaluating the compounds found by Southern Research scientists during high-throughput screening.

“THE ADDA played a large part in my decision to move to Alabama in 2007,” says Andrew West (right, with UAB President Ray Watts). West is developing a new treatment for Parkinson’s disease at UAB. “We feel that we have a very strong custom pipeline to move drugs that we find in a test tube all the way into people.”
IT’S NEVER BEEN EASIER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. LET US TELL YOU HOW TO START.

Campaign Co-chairs

Theresa Bruno
President
THB, Inc.

Johnny Johns
Chair, President, and CEO
Protective Life Corporation

Mike Warren
President and CEO
Children’s of Alabama

Ray L. Watts, M.D.
President

Shirley Salloway Kahn, Ph.D.
Vice President for Development, Alumni and External Relations

No matter who you are, or where you are in life, you have the power to make life better for everyone. Because when you support the work of UAB, giving something changes everything.

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