The Keck School of Medicine of USC has marked its most successful year of fundraising since 2011, raising almost $200 million and receiving six major gifts collectively worth nearly $125 million in the 2014-15 fiscal year. Overall, nearly 52,000 donors to the medical school have contributed $835 million, pushing the $1.5 billion Keck Medicine Initiative more than halfway to its goal as part of the $6 billion Campaign for the University of Southern California.

The campaign is an ambitious effort to fund academic priorities and expand the university’s impact on the community and world.

The extraordinary generosity of these individual, family and foundation donors to the Keck School of Medicine has spurred the university’s contributions to a global health revolution now transforming the practice of medicine.

Gifts support a wide range of USC’s medical education, research and patient care efforts, from fighting leukemia to improving hearing to mapping the brain. As part of the Campaign for USC, the Keck Medicine Initiative aims to improve the quality of life of people in Southern California and around the world by bringing cutting-edge science and medicine together.

“These six major gifts, along with the collective contributions of so many other donors, are a concrete endorsement of the vision for USC to invest in the promise and potential of biomedical research,” said Carmen A. Puliafito, MD, MBA, dean of the Keck School of Medicine. “Through their philanthropy, all of our donors help us to advance our tri-part mission: providing the best in patient care, finding new treatments and cures for disease and educating the next generation of physicians.”
USC Trustee Malcolm Currie, PhD, and his wife Barbara have given $10 million toward the endowment of the Keck School of Medicine of USC and construction of the USC Michelson Center for Convergent Bioscience.

In recognition of their investment in the university’s biomedical research and education, two facilities will be named in honor of the Curries: a new Health Sciences Campus residence hall that will open in 2016 and the lobby of the USC Michelson Center.

An engineering physicist who was chair and CEO of Hughes Aircraft, Malcolm Currie has served as a member of the USC Board of Trustees since 1989 and chaired the board from 1995-2000. He and his wife Barbara have been generous supporters of the university, endowing the Malcolm R. Currie Chair in Technology and the Humanities in 2008. The chair, currently held by USC President C. L. Max Nikias, was USC’s first endowed faculty position honoring exceptional achievements in both realms.

“The Trojan Family will be forever grateful to Mal and Barbara for their leadership, generosity and commitment to our university,” Nikias said. “Their outstanding support of USC’s medical research and education has done so much to transform Los Angeles into a vibrant center for biomedical innovations, and it has kept the university at the very fore of this growth.”

The Malcolm and Barbara Currie Residence Hall will add 450 beds for HSC students. The building, now under construction, will include a day care facility for students with families.

The USC Michelson Center will be the largest building on the University Park Campus when completed in 2017. It aims to be a catalyst for a biomedical research corridor in Los Angeles. The Malcolm and Barbara Currie Lobby within the 190,000-square-foot space will be the gateway to a center where engineers and scientists will work together to advance bioscience and bio-engineering research.

“I feel very privileged to have been part of USC’s rise to recognition as one of the world’s great research universities, and I look forward to USC’s continuing major contributions to society from our focus on the convergence of the engineering and medical sciences,” Malcolm Currie said.

A defense and aerospace industry leader whose work underpins today’s national security systems, Malcolm Currie served in the 1970s as Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering and as the U.S.-designated national armament director in NATO. He is also known for leading Hughes Aircraft from 1988 to 1993.
Keck School celebrates opening of new kidney research center

Keck School of Medicine of USC researchers recently joined board members from the University Kidney Research Organization (UKRO) to celebrate the opening of the USC/UKRO Kidney Research Center in the Mudd Memorial Research Building.

An initial $3.5 million pledge from UKRO supports the center and its six labs. The USC/UKRO Kidney Research Center will be led by Kenneth Hallows, MD, PhD, an internationally recognized expert in ion transport physiology.

Hallowes joined Keck Medicine of USC on July 1 from the University of Pittsburgh and the O’Brien Pittsburgh Center for Kidney Research.

Along with Hallows, researcher Núria M. Pastor-Soler, MD, PhD, a former associate professor of medicine at the University of Pittsburgh, has joined the center.

The center will become an important facility in basic and translational kidney research with clinical initiatives that have a positive impact on patients with kidney disease – not only in Los Angeles, but across the nation, Hallows said.

“I am excited for the potential of the research that will be done here,” said Hallows, chief of the division of nephrology and hypertension. “It’s a great opportunity to forge new collaborations across Keck Medicine of USC. We’re looking forward to building a core group of researchers dedicated to finding better treatments and cures for various kidney diseases.”

On a recent afternoon, Hallows was joined by Ed Crandall, MD, PhD, chair of the Keck School of Medicine’s Department of Medicine; USC/UKRO Research Center Co-Director Vito Campese, MD; and UKRO board members on a tour of the new center.

“This center will be an asset to promote nephrology research at USC,” said UKRO President and CEO Ken Kleinberg. “We want this to become the preeminent nephrology group in America.”

Recruitment of additional faculty researchers is currently underway.

Occupying two floors in the Mudd Memorial Research Building, the center is the focal point of a new multi-photon confocal microscope capable of producing 3D images in real time, up to 1,000 times larger than they appear to the naked eye. The microscope will be used to examine kidney structure and function in living kidneys.

Along with kidney research, the center will be a resource for medical students and other trainees, helping to create greater awareness of the field of nephrology.
Pioneering master’s program welcomes first cohort of students

Considered to be the first of its kind in the United States, a new master’s degree program in the art and science of neuroimaging welcomed its inaugural class this fall at the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

The one-year master’s of science in neuroimaging and informatics (NIIN) is offered through the USC Mark and Mary Stevens Neuroimaging and Informatics Institute. The research center, which joined USC in 2013, is considered one of the world’s finest neuro scanning and genetic testing labs.

“This program is a highly unique educational course of study for the field of brain imaging,” said John Darrell Van Horn, PhD, program director and associate professor of neurology at the institute and its Laboratory of Neuro Imaging. “It’s also unique for USC. It’s going to put us as leaders in the rich and dynamic field of neuroimaging.”

Classes are held at the Keck School of Medicine. Students are introduced to modern neuroimaging data through access to state-of-the-art neuroimaging systems. They are responsible for collection of data and creation of analytics, and they draw scientific conclusions.

In addition to intimate class sizes taught by neuroscience faculty, students will have access to the institute’s new brain scanning facility expected to open next spring.

“Students will be able to gather, analyze and explore piles and piles of neuroimaging data on brain form, function and connectivity,” Van Horn said.

The inaugural class includes about 30 students from diverse educational backgrounds. The program is suited for students who have earned bachelor’s degrees in psychology, neuroscience, computer science, engineering, physics and biology.

“This exciting new master’s program has something for everybody and provides an environment where everybody can make contributions,” Van Horn said.

The neuroimaging and informatics program is ideal for students looking to expand their knowledge before pursuing medical degrees or doctoral studies, Van Horn added.

The program consists of 10 courses; 26 units are required to graduate.

The curriculum focuses on the basics of the human brain — particularly from the perspective of neuroimaging — and data collection using state-of-the-art MRI scanners and other systems, cell structures, genetic tests and microscopy.

Neuroscience is considered one of the fastest-growing scientific fields, and demand for graduates with specialized neuroimaging training is expected to boom. USC’s graduates will be well-equipped to become scientific coordinators or lead analysts in research laboratories or to apply to a medical training program or to engage in public policy or regulatory administration of academic, clinical or business efforts.

“NIIN students will be ideally positioned to enter any field related to the study of the brain,” said Van Horn.
Spurring innovation through giving

Richard Merkin, MD, is the founder of the Heritage Provider Network, which, under his leadership, became the largest physician-owned and operated integrated delivery system in the United States. He sits on the boards of many colleges and universities, including the Board of Overseers at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, and is known as much for his philanthropy as for his leadership in the health care field.

Q: You have made several donations to the Keck School of Medicine of USC over the years. Why have you supported this institution for so many years?
A: My entire career has focused on my desire to ensure that, as a society, we are able to provide high quality healthcare to all of our citizens. Because of the way care is delivered in this country we spend far too much on care and not nearly enough on prevention and discovery. I believe that through my support for the Keck School we will be able to advance the discovery of cures to advance this effort.

Q: Most recently, you funded four assistant professorships in regenerative medicine. Will you tell us a little about what interests you about regenerative medicine?
A: As we are all aware, our population is aging and there has been a dramatic increase in chronic disease. Regenerative medicine offers the greatest promise to allow us to move beyond the same solutions we have used for years, which are no longer proving effective. Regenerative medicine isn’t new but USC’s research centers are making strides in tomorrow’s clinical advances and innovative research projects.

Q: You chose, with this gift, to support the work of junior faculty. Can you explain what was behind that decision and why you think it is important to support junior faculty?
A: Some of the greatest breakthroughs come from younger individuals precisely because they have not been taught that there is only one way to think about a solution to a problem. Einstein was 26 years old in 1905 when he published four papers that changed our views of space and time. The lifeblood of scientific innovation is the fresh views that come from young, passionate, hardworking, talented scientists.

Q: What core values do you look for in the institutions that benefit from the Merkin Family Foundation?
A: I look for institutions that care as deeply as I do about making world changing differences in the areas I care most about – the health of our citizens, education and young people. Society depends on providing a solid educational background to the young, as well as assuring that they have the best health care available so they can take advantage of the opportunities afforded to them.

Q: What advice would you give medical students about practicing medicine in the 21st century?
A: Treatments are changing. The method of paying providers is changing. Technology will revolutionize the practice of medicine, from how it is practiced to where it is practiced. Medicine will be much more about how we holistically care for the entire individual to keep them well, rather than what we can do after they have become ill.

Q: There might be some people reading this who don’t know about your involvement with the X Prize, which inspired you to create the $3 million Heritage Health Prize. Will you share with us what you think are some of the interesting ideas that came to light because of that prize?
A: We created the Heritage Health Prize for two reasons. First, we wanted to find a predictor for hospitalization. As a country we spend almost $40 billion a year on unnecessary hospitalization. If we can predict who will be admitted to the hospital, we can try and prevent the unnecessary admissions. Second, the world today is awash in data, including health care. But the best data scientists traditionally go to Silicon Valley and Wall Street. I wanted to introduce data scientists to health care.

In the end, we obtained a solution that was much better than anything we had seen before. And, we had thousands of data scientists from 41 countries around the world competing for the prize. The winning team of nine only included one person with any health care experience at all. So, we believe it was “mission accomplished” on both fronts.
The Board of Overseers of the Keck School of Medicine of USC is made up of prominent Los Angeles leaders in business, the arts, politics, media and academia. Its top priority is providing school leadership with unparalleled, “real world” guidance to develop and implement a plan to accomplish its goals and become a top-tier medical school.

Wallis Annenberg, Annenberg Foundation. USC Trustee Wallis Annenberg is the chairman of the board of the Annenberg Foundation and the longest-serving trustee on USC’s Board of Trustees. In 2010, the Annenberg Foundation donated $5 million to establish the Wallis Annenberg Endowed Scholarship Fund to support students at the Keck School of Medicine. Annenberg Scholars receive up to $35,000 per year to support their education.

Eli Broad, Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation. A philanthropic leader in biomedical research, among others, Eli Broad — through the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation — created USC’s stem cell research center with a gift of $30 million to the Keck School of Medicine of USC in 2006. The foundation has made several subsequent gifts to the Keck School, including a $2 million gift to fund exceptional senior postdoctoral fellows in stem cell science.

Dr. Malcolm Currie, Hughes Aircraft Company. An engineering physicist who was chair and CEO of Hughes Aircraft, USC Trustee Malcolm Currie has served as a member of the USC Board of Trustees since 1989 and chaired the board from 1995-2000. He and his wife Barbara recently made a gift of $10 million toward the endowment of the Keck School of Medicine of USC and construction of the USC Michelson Center for Convergent Bioscience (see page 2 for full story).

Robert A. Day, W.M. Keck Foundation • Howard B. Keck, W.M. Keck Foundation • Stephen M. Keck, Trust Company of the West, W.M. Keck Foundation. The W. M. Keck Foundation has been a key partner for the Keck School. In 1999, the foundation made its historic $110 million naming gift to the school, and in 2011 it gave a $150 million naming gift to support USC’s academic medical enterprise, accelerating groundbreaking medical, clinical and translational research and education.

Helene Galen. USC Trustee Helene Galen, longtime USC benefactor and Coachella Valley philanthropist, along with her late husband Lou Galen, made a significant gift to the Department of Neurology, under the direction of Dr. Helena Chui, to support work in the areas of Alzheimer’s disease, memory loss and related disorders. Helene continues to provide annual gifts to support the Keck School of Medicine and the Dean’s most pressing priorities.

Ming Hsieh. USC Trustee and founder of Pasadena-based Cogent Inc., Ming Hsieh made a transformational gift in 2010 to create a permanent endowment to support research and development in the burgeoning field of nanomedicine for cancer. The university established the USC Ming Hsieh Institute for Research on Engineering-Medicine for Cancer in recognition of his generous support.

Ghada Irani, UNICEF Southern California. Ghada Irani dedicates her time, international perspectives and resources to a broad spectrum of charitable efforts. Earlier this year, Ghada and Ray Irani (a member of the USC Board of Trustees) gave a leadership gift to USC, a portion of which was directed to the Keck School to establish the Ghada Irani Endowed Chair.
The board has played an important role in establishing the financial health of the school. The Overseers are role models for the alumni and friends of the school, setting an example of generous personal giving towards the Keck School. Together this group is responsible for a significant portion of the Keck Medicine Initiative, the $1.5 billion fundraising campaign, part of the University’s $6 billion capital campaign.

Highlighted here is a sampling of gifts given to the Keck School by members of the Keck School Board of Overseers.

**Deborah Lanni, Lanni Family Charitable Foundation.** Deborah Lanni is president of the Lanni Family Charitable Foundation, and her husband J. Terrance Lanni served on the Keck School Board of Overseers until his death due to cancer in 2011. In 2014, Deborah Lanni pledged her support to establish an endowed chair in gastrointestinal cancer research in honor of her husband. The J. Terrance Lanni Chair in Cancer Research was officially dedicated on September 23 and Dr. Heinz-Josef Lenz was installed as the inaugural chair holder.

**David Lee, Clarity Partners.** David L. Lee is a co-founder and managing general partner of Clarity Partners, a private equity firm that invests exclusively in communications, media and related technology companies. The David and Ellen Lee Foundation made a gift to establish the David L. Lee and Simon Ramo Chair in Health Science and Technology at the Keck School.

**Alfred Mann, Alfred Mann Foundation.** USC Trustee Alfred Mann, a successful businessman and philanthropist, donated $100 million through the Alfred Mann Foundation to create the Alfred Mann Institute at USC, which invests $5 million each year to accelerate the commercialization of bioengineering and medical inventions from USC.

**Dr. Richard Merkin, Heritage Provider Network.** Through the Merkin Family Foundation, Richard Merkin recently established the Richard N. Merkin, MD, Fund for Professorships in Regenerative Medicine. The gift enables the Keck School to retain the most outstanding young faculty members and to provide them with career-shaping resources. (See page 5 for a Q&A with Dr. Merkin.)

**Holly Robinson Peete, HollyRod Foundation.** Co-founder and CEO of the HollyRod Foundation, Holly Robinson Peete has provided a generous gift to support the Movement Disorders Program in the Department of Neurology.

**Alia Tutor, Indego Africa.** A former advisor to the United Nation’s Office for Partnerships, Alia Tutor dedicates her time to the board of directors of Indego Africa, an organization that supports female artisans in war-torn Rwanda. Through a gift to the Keck School of Medicine, she established the Alia Tutor Chair in Reproductive Medicine at the Keck School in 2014.

**Selim Zilkha, Zilkha Biomass Fuels.** In 2013, philanthropist and businessman Selim Zilkha, co-owner of Zilkha Biomass Fuels, pledged a generous gift to establish the Mary Hayley and Selim Zilkha Chair for Alzheimer’s research at the Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute (ZNI) at USC. This gift brought Zilkha’s total giving to neuroscience research at the Keck School to more than $30 million. Zilkha established the ZNI at USC in 2002 and has made additional gifts to support the recruitment of senior scientists and investigators to ZNI.
A pioneering research institute at Keck Medicine of USC was renamed Oct. 7 to honor a pair of longtime USC supporters, Mark and Mary Stevens, who donated $50 million to further the institute’s study of the human brain.

USC President C. L. Max Nikias, PhD, said the newly renamed USC Mark and Mary Stevens Neuroimaging and Informatics Institute brings together USC’s academic strengths in several disciplines in an effort to find answers for the millions who suffer from a neurological condition.

“This is also a day of immense gratitude because of the visionary generosity of USC alum and Trustee, Mark Stevens, and his wife, Mary Matthew Stevens,” said Nikias. “This places USC firmly in a position to accelerate the pace of the most ingenious work in the neurosciences.”

The institute, led by Arthur Toga, PhD, and Paul Thompson, PhD, is comprised of more than 130 faculty and staff with expertise in fields such as neuroscience, engineering, biology, chemistry and pharmacy. It will be housed in a building now named Stevens Hall, which is under construction at HSC for a 2016 opening. A rendering of the completed building was used as a backdrop during the ceremony.

The institute aims to speed the translation of basic research into new therapies, preventions and cures for brain injury and disease, including Alzheimer’s disease, schizophrenia and traumatic brain injury.

Keck School of Medicine of USC Dean Carmen A. Puliafito, MD, MBA, lauded the research that Toga and Thompson have already accomplished and said the gift will help accelerate the pace of discovery.

“Their many seminal achievements include being among the first to map the spread of Alzheimer’s disease in the living human brain and the creation of 3- and 4-dimensional brain atlases to examine the effects of neurological diseases,” Puliafito said.

The new facility will house the most advanced brain imaging equipment, which, he noted, would change the Keck campus and the field of neuroscience forever.

“I have a bold vision to make our USC Mark and Mary Stevens Neuroimaging and Informatics Institute the No. 1 place where the best and brightest researchers come together to innovate and advance brain science,” Toga said.

Thompson, professor of neurology, psychiatry and behavioral sciences, radiology, engineering and ophthalmology, added that the facility will serve as the new hub for the largest imaging studies in the world, bringing together the work of more than 1,000 imaging labs across the globe.

Mark Stevens said he and his wife Mary were compelled to give generously because they saw an opportunity to help millions of people, of all ages, who suffer from a range of neurological problems, from learning disabilities to Alzheimer’s disease.

“It is hard to find a family in America that hasn’t been affected by a neurological condition,” said Mark Stevens, who is a member of the USC Board of Trustees and sits on the USC Health System Board.

“Our gift, hopefully, will help advance understanding of diseases and abnormalities in the brain,” he said.
USC Trustee Jane Hoffman Popovich ’65, an accomplished businesswoman and philanthropist with a lifelong commitment to the university and the community, died Aug. 4 following a long battle with cancer. She was 71.

“My wife, Niki, and I will miss Jane deeply,” said USC President C. L. Max Nikias. “She was a close and caring friend, a good neighbor and, yes, a great Trojan. She has left all of us with so many wonderful memories at USC and in Sun Valley, that we will cherish them for the rest of our lives.”

Popovich and her husband, J. Kristoffer Popovich ’65, MBA ’70, have been longtime, generous volunteers and benefactors to USC, supporting many areas of the university, including the USC Marshall School of Business, the Keck School of Medicine of USC and USC Athletics. Their giving, which encompasses more than $20 million in gifts and pledges, most recently included $4 million toward cancer research at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center in June.

Popovich, who earned a bachelor’s degree from USC Marshall in 1965, was a proud supporter of business education at USC. She served as a trustee of the H. Leslie Hoffman and Elaine S. Hoffman Foundation, which made a lead gift of $5 million in 1992 toward construction of a technologically advanced facility for USC Marshall graduate programs. In recognition, the building was named Jane Hoffman and J. Kristoffer Popovich Hall.

Advancing the legacy of her parents, H. Leslie and Elaine S. Hoffman, was of paramount importance to Jane Popovich. Her parents were avid supporters of higher education in Los Angeles, which was a driving force for their decades-long support of USC — even though they didn’t attend the university. Two USC buildings bear the Hoffmans’ names: H. Leslie Hoffman Hall of Business Administration for her father, a 17-year member of the USC Board of Trustees and national committee chair of the university’s 1961 Master Plan; and Elaine Stevely Hoffman Medical Research Center on the USC Health Sciences Campus for her mother. The Keck School of Medicine presents the Elaine Stevely Hoffman Award at commencement ceremonies to supporters who demonstrate longstanding contribution and unwavering dedication to the Keck School of Medicine and its people.

Popovich credited her father for serving as a role model. “He gave me the tools and the resources that have enabled me to support USC and carry on a tradition of giving back to the community,” she said in 2006 upon accepting USC Marshall’s Phoenix Award, which honored her career longevity and philanthropy.

Cancer research also was a major focus of her family’s charitable giving and involvement. The Popoviches’ $4 million gift this year funded the Jane and Kris Popovich Chair in Cancer Research at USC Norris. The donation came a decade after the family’s gift to endow the H. Leslie Hoffman and Elaine S. Hoffman Chair in Cancer Research at the Keck School of Medicine.

She joined the USC Board of Trustees in 1983. Her longtime dedication to USC was recognized in 1997, when she received the Alumni Merit Award from the USC Alumni Association. One of 55 founding members of the USC Associates, she served as its president as well as on the USC Marshall Board of Leaders, and the board of Women of Troy. Her involvement extended to Town & Gown and its Junior Auxiliary, as well as membership on the USC Associates’ San Gabriel Valley Steering Committee.

The Popoviches operated Hoffman Associates, a successor of Western Mortgage, which developed and managed real estate, and Hoffman Video Systems, which integrated audio and video equipment for commercial applications. The couple and their daughters and sons-in-law also have been major supporters of Children’s Hospital Los Angeles and other causes.
Keck School promotes key faculty to leadership positions

Farnham named new chair of Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Dean Carmen A. Puliafito announced the appointment of Peggy Farnham, PhD, the W. M. Keck Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, as the new chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. Farnham, an international leader in the field of genomics, has been one of the pioneers in studying global binding sites of transcription factors. More recently, she has become well-known for her work in the genome-wide distribution and function of several important chromatin modifying factors.

Farnham has held a leadership role in the administration as associate dean for graduate affairs (Doctoral Programs) for the past two years. As associate dean, she led an initiative to establish new focus and rigor in our graduate programs. She was instrumental in helping create four new interdisciplinary PhD programs that are more clearly aligned with research strengths at the Keck School (Cancer Biology and Genomics; Development, Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine; Medical Biology; and Molecular Structure and Signaling).

Wood named new chair of Department of Cell and Neurobiology

Ruth Wood, PhD, the W. M. Keck Professor of Cell and Neurobiology, has been named chair of the Department of Cell and Neurobiology, an appointment that became effective July 1. In her own research, Wood investigates neural circuits for behavior, including social behavior, affective behavior, and reinforcing behavior. In particular, she is interested in how steroid hormones act in the brain, both during development and in the adult, to effect sex differences and modify behavior.

Wood has held and will retain a leadership role in the administration as associate dean for appointments and promotions at the Keck School. In this role, she works with the vice dean for faculty affairs and the staff of the Office for Faculty Affairs on career development and mentoring of junior faculty of all tracks. A past member and chair of the University Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure panel on life sciences, her advice and counsel already have proven invaluable in the preparation of junior faculty for this milestone in their career. She also has been appointed chair of the University Committee for Academic Program Review, where she and a large and diverse committee of faculty from across the university will take an active role in assessing and improving programs that grant doctoral degrees.
Laird-Offringa named associate dean for graduate affairs (Doctoral Programs)

Ite Laird-Offringa, PhD, has been appointed associate dean for graduate affairs (Doctoral Programs) at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. An associate professor of surgery and biochemistry and molecular biology, Laird-Offringa has served as the director of the PIBBS program (Program in Biomedical and Biological Sciences) since 2008.

The PIBBS program was established to recruit top-caliber PhD students in biomedical and biological sciences to USC and to guide them during their initial year in the identification of an appropriate doctoral program, mentor and research project. “The move to associate dean for graduate affairs is a natural progression for someone as dedicated and passionate about her support for the graduate programs,” stated Dean Carmen A. Puliafito in a memo to faculty. Laird-Offringa will retain her position as director of the PIBBS program.

At Keck-Dornsife retreat, scientists share research

Seeking to strengthen partnerships between two of USC’s oldest schools, scientists from the Keck School of Medicine of USC and USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences recently gathered to discuss new research and areas for future collaboration. The Keck-Dornsife Research Retreat was held Oct. 1 and Oct. 2 at Terranea Resort in Rancho Palos Verdes.

“This is great science,” said Thomas Buchanan, MD, vice dean for research at the Keck School of Medicine, at the opening of the two-day event. “The fundamental idea of this retreat is to build basic scientific collaboration between the two schools. We don’t want to leave here without concrete plans for the future.” The retreat was organized by leaders from both campuses, Buchanan (Keck) and Charles McKenna, PhD (Dornsife). The goal of the retreat was to engage leading researchers and research leaders from the two schools to discuss mutual research interests, challenges and shared opportunities. Participants were encouraged to come away from the retreat with concrete plans to develop, enhance and sustain productive scientific interactions.

The opening day of the retreat featured “lightning round” presentations — five-minute presentations from accomplished researchers from both schools representing hot research areas with a goal to stimulate discussion on the scientific possibilities for bridging areas of research between the two schools. The second day featured sessions on “Research Collaborations/Team Science,” led by moderators Art Toga, PhD, Andy McMahon, PhD, and Ray Stevens, PhD; “Partnerships with Industry,” led by Steve Gruber, MD, PhD, MPH, and Scott Fraser, PhD; “Core Resources,” led by Peter Conti, MD, PhD, and Sergey Nuzdhin, PhD; and “Joint Training,” led by Ite Laird, PhD, and Stephen Bradforth, PhD.

The retreat was hosted by Carmen A. Puliafito, MD, MBA, dean of the Keck School of Medicine. Randolph Hall, PhD, vice president of research gave welcoming remarks on behalf of the University. Paul Aisen, MD, director of the Alzheimer’s Therapeutic Research Institute, was the retreat’s keynote speaker.
Keck School gathers to remember former dean Brian E. Henderson

They gathered to remember a colleague, mentor and leader — a “towering figure in American medicine” whose work in cancer research at Keck Medicine of USC echoes across the globe.

Brian Henderson, former dean of the Keck School of Medicine and founding chair of the school’s nationally ranked Department of Preventive Medicine, passed away in his San Marino home after a 13-month battle with lung cancer. He was 77. Several hundred faculty members, students, friends and family members gathered Sept. 16 at Mayer Auditorium on the Health Sciences Campus to remember Henderson, one of the world’s preeminent authorities in cancer epidemiology.

Photos by Steve Cohn.

Above: Judith Henderson and Stephen B. Gruber at the memorial service for Brian E. Henderson.
Above right: Professor Sean O’Brien Henderson, MD, speaks about his father during the tribute.
Below: Dean Carmen A. Puliafito greets USC President C. L. Max Nikias the service. Below center: Several hundred faculty, students, friends and family members attended the event. Below right: Judith Henderson greets President Nikias after the tribute.