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UA Steele Children's Research Center Receives Record \$8.25 Million in Endowment Pledges

The gifts will provide long-term support for critical faculty research in pediatric diseases and also provide researchers access to the latest technology and equipment to find solutions for a broad range of childhood diseases.

The [University of Arizona Steele Children's Research Center](#) has announced the largest endowment gift commitments in its 25-year history.

Totaling \$8.25 million, the gift commitments are:

- Three endowment gifts totaling \$5 million from the **Phoenix Women's Board** of the UA Steele Children's Research Center, known as [PANDA](#) (People Acting Now Discover Answers);
- Two endowment gifts totaling \$2.25 million from the [Arizona Elks Major Projects](#); and,
- An endowment gift of \$1 million from the **Alan and Janice Levin family**.

The gifts will support critical faculty research in pediatric diseases, ranging from autoimmune diseases to developmental pediatrics. Support from the gifts also will give researchers access to the latest technology and equipment to assist them in finding solutions for a broad range of childhood diseases.

These investments are the largest commitments from PANDA and the Arizona Elks Major Projects, whose current endowments and philanthropic efforts support the statewide research and education missions of the UA Steele Center. This is the second endowed professorship the Levin family supports at the University of Arizona.

"Since 1999, PANDA has supported discoveries to improve treatments and cures for devastating childhood diseases. Our nearly two-decade partnership is built on the trust we have in Dr. Ghishan and his extraordinary team to find answers and provide hope to thousands of children and their families. We are so proud to support his long-term vision with these additional endowment gifts," said **Jacque Linaman**, a UA alumna and the 2017-18 president of PANDA.

"The Steele Center has had incredible impact in the lives of children and families across Arizona, the Southwest and beyond and these gifts are a wonderful acknowledgement of the special and important role this center has," said UA President **Robert C. Robbins**. "While the Steele Center's physician-scientists commit themselves to treating and curing serious conditions that affect young lives, these investments will provide much-needed support for the outstanding faculty and the critical research at the core of the center's work. We are all so grateful for this amazing generosity."

The endowment gifts are amplified through the UA's **Eminent Scholars Program**. The program allows a donor-established fund to grow for five years by providing the value of the endowment payout directly to the college that benefits from the gift, while the actual payout is reinvested in the endowment fund. These gifts to the UA Steele Center represent the first five Eminent Scholars endowments established at the UA since the program was reinstated last year. With amplification by as much as 35 percent, the \$8.25 million in philanthropic gifts can result in an impact of more than \$10 million.

"These are truly transformational gifts that will be vital to our work. I am so grateful for their steadfast commitment to our children. These endowments further demonstrate their support for our long-term vision," said **Fayez K. Ghishan, MD**, director of the UA Steele Center and head of the UA Department of Pediatrics.

Five faculty members will hold these endowed chairs and professorships at the UA Steele Center:

- **Arizona Elks Endowed Chair in Statewide Pediatric Research** Chair: Wayne Morgan, MD
- **Arizona Elks Endowed Faculty Research Fund for Technology and Innovation** Chairs: Fayez K. Ghishan, MD, and Pawel Kiela, DVM, PhD
- **PANDA Endowed Professorship in Autoimmune Disease Research** Chair: Pawel Kiela, DVM, PhD
- **PANDA Endowed Faculty Research Fund in Autoimmune Disease Research** Chair: Michael Daines, MD
- **PANDA Endowed Faculty Research Fund in Developmental Pediatrics** Chair: Sydney Rice, MD
- **Alan & Janice Levin Family Endowed Professorship in Pediatrics** Chair: Fayez K. Ghishan, MD

The UA Steele Center has experienced a record fundraising year. With support from individuals, foundations and charitable groups, the center has purchased vital equipment to create 3-D images of cell function, created a national clinical trial in pediatric bone marrow transplant and established a center of excellence for a rare autoimmune disorder (children's postinfectious autoimmune encephalopathy).

"Our support for the Steele Center is long-standing and has not wavered for 25 years. The UA's Eminent Scholars Program gives

organizations like ours the opportunity to expand our financial support for the Steele Center in key areas that have a positive long-term influence on Arizona's children and our communities," said Arizona Elks Major Projects President **Ira Cohen**.

UA Steele Children's Research Center

The [UA Steele Children's Research Center](#) is one of the prestigious Centers of Excellence at the [UA College of Medicine – Tucson](#) at the [University of Arizona Health Sciences](#). It is the state's only academic pediatric research center designated by the Arizona Board of Regents, and the only facility in Southern Arizona where researchers and physician-scientists are dedicated to advancing medical knowledge through basic and translational research to improve children's health. As researchers, they seek to discover answers to children's medical mysteries. As physician-scientists, they provide compassionate care to hospitalized patients at [Banner Children's at Diamond Children's Medical Center](#) and pediatric outpatient clinics throughout Tucson and the state. And, as faculty members with the [UA Department of Pediatrics](#), they teach and train the next generation of pediatricians and researchers.

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