



## PRESS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

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DORIS DUKE  
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Medical Research Program

### **DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES OPENING OF NEW MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NATAL'S NELSON R. MANDELA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE IN DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA**

*Doris Duke Medical Research Institute to Provide State-of-the-Art Research Laboratories and  
Expanded Opportunities to Train African HIV/AIDS Clinical Researchers*

**Monday, July 28, 2003. New York, NY** – The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) joins the University of Natal in Durban, South Africa, in announcing the July 29, 2003 opening of the Doris Duke Medical Research Institute, a state-of-the-art research facility at the University of Natal's Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine. The institute is located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, which has the highest prevalence of HIV/AIDS in South Africa.

The institute's research facilities will help to train a new generation of clinical researchers, enhance the clinical research infrastructure in KwaZulu-Natal, and foster collaborations between research groups working on similar projects in South Africa and other countries.

The institute is the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine's first new building since its founding in 1950. During the era of apartheid, the medical school at the University of Natal was the first medical school in South Africa that trained non-white medical students. It is also the only medical school in KwaZulu-Natal.

The new institute is an important component of the University of Natal's commitment to expand research and training of clinical researchers in HIV/AIDS and related diseases. The institute spans close to 54,000 square feet (5,000 square meters) and has 10 specialized laboratories. Funding for the new \$5.17 million (R40 million) institute came from DDCF, which awarded two grants totaling \$1.8 million, and from funds raised and contributed by the University of Natal. For more information on the Doris Duke Medical Research Institute, please visit the home page of the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine at:  
<http://www.nu.ac.za/department/default.asp?dept=medicineund>.

"The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is pleased to join the University of Natal in supporting the Doris Duke Medical Research Institute. We hope this facility will expand opportunities for collaborations among African researchers, and that our commitment will spur additional investments in the infrastructure needed for developing regions to battle the devastating toll of the HIV/AIDS pandemic," said Joan E. Spero, president of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

Research and enhanced training of a critical mass of scientists in the new institute will significantly impact on medical sciences in Africa, said Professor Barry Kistnasamy, Dean of the

Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine. "The Institute will provide the infrastructure for strategic research and it will focus primarily on diseases affecting the poor and vulnerable in South Africa and indeed all of Africa. The project to build a custom-designed research institute is a bold and significant initiative. It is a major investment in Kwa-Zulu Natal and marks a milestone in the 53-year history of the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine. I believe this research institute, together with the public and private sector involvement, is pivotal to further improvements in the health status of our population."

One of the research endeavors based at the Doris Duke Medical Research Institute is the bilateral HIV Pathogenesis Program between the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine and Harvard Medical School. Funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the program supports research and training collaborations between the University of Natal, the University of Cape Town, Harvard Medical School, the Perinatal HIV Research Unit of the University of Witwatersrand, and the National Institute of Communicable Diseases.

### **International AIDS Grant-Making Objectives of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**

The foundation's international AIDS grant-making objectives are: 1) to support the clinical research required for effective treatment and care of AIDS and related illnesses in the low-resource countries hardest hit by the AIDS pandemic; and 2) to strengthen the clinical research capacity of those countries. To date, the foundation has approved up to \$10.1 million for grants that support HIV/AIDS research in developing countries, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa. For more information on the foundation's international AIDS grants, visit the Medical Research Program's Web site at <http://ddcf.aibs.org/iar/index.asp>.

In addition to its international AIDS grants, the foundation has approved 19 grants totaling \$13.5 million to support U.S. physician-scientists conducting HIV/AIDS clinical research. Almost all of those grants are domestically focused and cover a broad spectrum of clinical research including disease etiology, health outcomes, and HIV/AIDS prevention. More information on these awards can be found at <http://ddcf.aibs.org>.

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, wildlife conservation, medical research and the prevention of child maltreatment, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties. More information on the foundation can be found at [www.ddcf.org](http://www.ddcf.org).

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