

'The Antithesis of Depression'

U-M CELEBRATES ITS PIONEERING CENTER WITH THOSE WHO ARE MAKING IT A REALITY

A debilitating illness that afflicts more than 20 million Americans, depression costs the economy billions each year in lost productivity, and can shatter the lives of patients and their families. Fewer than three million of those patients are currently well-diagnosed and adequately treated, but the University of Michigan is determined to change that.

A team led by John Greden, M.D., the Rachel Upjohn Professor of Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences, chair of the Department of Psychiatry and executive director of the U-M Depression Center, is melding together the disciplinary silos that have slowed depression research and treatment, as well as challenging the stigma that has long burdened patients, discussion of the topic and health care policy.

On September 8 at the Michigan League, university and health system leaders, staff and major supporters of the center gathered to celebrate what will be known as the Rachel Upjohn Building, a new home for the center planned for completion in 2006. A leadership gift of \$10 million from Mary Upjohn Meader and her husband of 39 years, Edwin, of Kalamazoo, is helping to take the building project from concept to physical reality.

The Meaders' generosity continues a family tradition of quiet philanthropy started by Mary Meader's grandfather and continued by many members of her family. It is a tradition that has its roots in William Erastus Upjohn's days as a medical student at the University of Michigan in the 1870s, where he honed the inventiveness that led him to develop the first pills that dissolved easily in the human body. Upjohn, who graduated from the medical school in 1875, founded the company bearing his family name with his brother; the enterprise grew into a



Edwin and Mary Meader

pharmaceutical industry giant of the 20th century. Many of Upjohn's sons and daughters pursued medicine and pharmacy studies at U-M.

Says Ed Meader, "Dr. Upjohn — or W.E., as he has become known here — had the caring for humanity, the imagination, persistence and genius for organization which created for his employees, his family, and his community a flow of wealth still reaching out across this nation immeasurably. One could wish he knew about the Depression Center."

Mary Meader, whose birth name was Rachel Mary Upjohn, demonstrated her own inventiveness at an early age. In 1937, at the age of 21, she fashioned a sling that allowed her to hang a massive camera outside a small plane and take the first aerial photographs over Africa. Her work stands today as a compelling historical record.

The Meaders, who previously established the Rachel Upjohn Clinical Scholars Program and the Rachel Upjohn Professorship in Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences, have been motivated by their conviction that the current state of knowledge and clinical delivery systems related to depression are in their infancy. New

research breakthroughs are needed, they believe, as well as training for a new generation of clinical scholars.

Mary Meader says she hopes that the Depression Center "will be able to reach a lot of people who need care, improve upon current treatments, and be a model for the rest of the country." The center will bear her birth name, which was also the name of her grandmother, William Erastus Upjohn's wife.

In addition to the Department of Psychiatry, the Meaders have also supported the Kellogg Eye Center, the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, the U-M School of

Music, the University Musical Society, educational programs in the College of Literature, Science and the Arts, and the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology.

For Waltraud "Wally" Prechter, president of the World Heritage Foundation, the commitment to support the U-M Depression Center has deep roots in personal tragedy. Her husband, Heinz C. Prechter, former chairman and founder of the global automotive supplier ASC Inc., fell victim to suicide in 2001, after battling intermittent episodes of manic depression for more than 30 years. "Heinz touched the lives of thousands and made a difference in our communities, our state and our country," said then-Governor John Engler, a long-time friend of the Detroit-based industrialist, at the time of Prechter's death at age 59.

Heinz Prechter was the quintessential entrepreneur, visionary, community leader and philanthropist. An immigrant from Germany, Prechter founded the American Sunroof Company in a two-car garage in Los Angeles in 1965 and grew it into a premier global auto-



Architect's rendering of the Rachel Upjohn Building. Designed by Albert Kahn Associates, the 112,500-square-foot facility is scheduled for completion in 2006 and will be located near the East Ann Arbor Health Center. Eighteen U-M academic units, programs and institutes participate in the center's clinical, research and educational efforts; within the U-M Health System, the Depression Center collaborates with 37 centers, programs and medical disciplines.



A gala at the Michigan League on September 8 celebrates the U-M Depression Center's plans for the Rachel Upjohn Building. Significant support for the Depression Center has also come from Tom and Nancy Woodworth, the Eli Lilly and Company Foundation, and the FRIENDS of the University Hospitals and Health Centers.

motive supplier of specialty customization and open-air systems.

A strong advocate of health education for many years, Wally Prechter established the Heinz C. Prechter Fund for Manic Depression in 2001 in memory of her late husband to advance breakthrough medical research into



Wally Prechter

cures for bipolar disorder. The fund became the donor-advised Heinz C. Prechter Bipolar Research Fund at the University of Michigan Health System in 2004.

Wally Prechter has emerged as one of the most outspoken and effective mental health advocates in the U.S. She was instrumental in helping

establish the U-M Depression Center, the first comprehensive depression center in the nation, and has supported construction of its building with a \$2.5 million gift.

In 2002, Prechter provided testimony before the U.S. Congressional Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, requesting a significant increase in federal funding for the National

Institute of Mental Health and bipolar research. President George W. Bush appointed her to serve on the New Freedom Commission on Mental Health to help improve the mental health care system in America. In 2004, she was appointed by Governor Jennifer Granholm to co-chair the Michigan Mental Health Commission.

Born in Germany, Wally Prechter immigrated to the United States in 1977 and completed her education at the University of Michigan, earning a bachelor's degree in education with honors. "The establishment of a comprehensive Depression Center at the University of Michigan is a major milestone on the journey to destigmatize mental illnesses, to further research into mental illness, and to become a leader in the development of new evidence-based practices in the mental health field in our state, as well as our nation," Prechter says.

With interdisciplinary programs in education, research and clinical care, the Depression Center is already establishing a new paradigm to accelerate the pace at which discoveries are made and applied. "It also involves reaching out to diagnose and treat people earlier, when treatments are most effective," Greden says. "And it includes raising the level of public awareness and education about depressive and bipolar illnesses."

Phil Jenkins, a local business leader and U-M benefactor who was profiled in the spring/summer 2004 issue of *Medicine at Michigan*, agrees. Jenkins, whose wife, Lyn, struggled with

depression before her death in 1999, decries the stigma surrounding depressive illnesses. "Depression is an insidious thing we really don't recognize or like to admit to," he says. "We have to get over that." Jenkins' \$2 million gift to the Rachel Upjohn Building will help the University of Michigan do just that.



Phil Jenkins

"I envision the building to be what I call the 'antithesis of depression,'" Greden says. "If you're addressing a problem with some remaining stigma, you should have a facility that sends the right signals, so we intend the center to be light, airy, warm and inviting. The Rachel Upjohn Building represents a significant milestone toward achieving the goals we set when we first envisioned the center just a few years ago." [m](#)

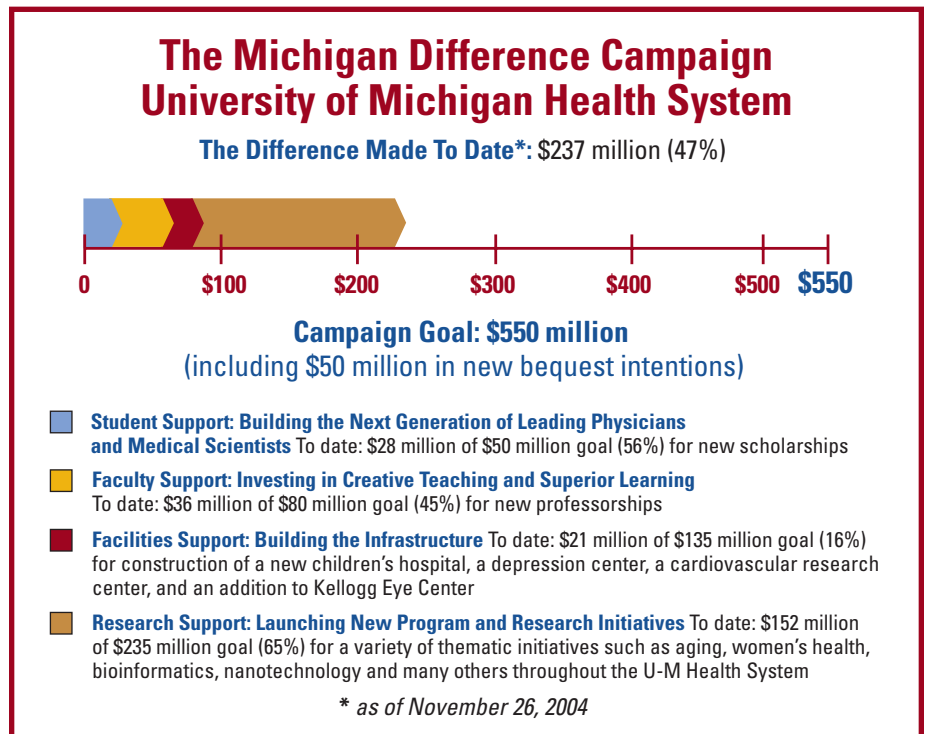
The Michigan Difference

A CAMPAIGN FOR MEDICINE AT MICHIGAN

Setting the most ambitious fund-raising goal in its history, the University of Michigan launched The Michigan Difference this past May, a campaign to raise \$2.5 billion University-wide – the largest fund-raising campaign ever undertaken by a public university. The U-M Health System, as a significant part of the University, seeks to raise \$550 million of the overall U-M goal, including \$50 million in new bequest intentions.

The Michigan Difference Campaign will help ensure that the University of Michigan’s role in medicine in America continues to flourish, that its promise of greater health and happiness for the citizens of Michigan, the Midwest, the nation and the world – a promise that has endured for more than a century and a half – will continue to benefit generations to come.

Throughout the campaign, scheduled to conclude in 2008, *Medicine at Michigan* will chronicle Health System progress toward its fund-raising goals in the areas of support for students, faculty, facilities and research and disciplinary programs.



AS WE GO TO PRESS...

Brehm Gift Will Accelerate U-M Type I Diabetes Research

Bill Brehm, chairman emeritus of SRA International, a leading information technology consulting and systems integration company in Fairfax, Virginia, and his wife, Dee, have made a \$44 million gift to the U-M Medical School to further research into understanding and treating type 1 diabetes. The gift is the largest in the school’s 154-year history and the second-largest in the history of the university. The next issue of *Medicine at Michigan* will report in depth on the gift’s potential impact on areas of diabetes research at Michigan and the promise it holds for advances in the fight against “the invisible epidemic.”

For more information, visit: www.med.umich.edu/brehm.