

Iris and Michael Smith Donate \$5 Million for New Building at National Jewish

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DENVER — The newest building on the campus of National Jewish Medical and Research Center will be named after Iris and Michael Smith, supporters of many Colorado organizations, who generously donated \$5 million to construct the six-story clinic and research facility.

The 90,000-square-foot Iris and Michael Smith Clinics and Laboratories will house patient services, including adult clinics and the rehabilitation department, and basic research laboratories. Groundbreaking will be held on April 28 and the building is scheduled to be completed in late 2006.

“After more than a decade of involvement with National Jewish, it is a privilege to contribute to the building of this important addition to the institution, which will further enhance the institution’s ranking as one of the leading hospitals in the world,” said Iris Smith.

“I’m overwhelmed by the magnanimous contribution from Iris and Michael Smith,” said Lynn M. Taussig, MD, President and CEO of National Jewish. “That they entrust us with this wonderful gift demonstrates their confidence in this institution and acknowledgement of our important mission.”

Michael Smith was previously the founder, CEO, President and largest shareholder in Colorado’s Basin Exploration until its sale in February 2001. He is currently Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of Freeport LNG Development, L.P., in Houston, Texas. Freeport LNG is currently building the first liquefied natural gas receiving terminal in the United States in over two decades. Now a Trustee for National Jewish, he was formerly a member of its Board of Directors.

Iris Smith is Chair, President and Treasurer of the Kaitar Foundation; Mr. Smith serves as the Vice-Chair and Secretary. The Kaitar Foundation has given to numerous Colorado charities. Mrs. Smith’s philanthropic interests include The Children’s Developmental Center, The Woman of Tomorrow, and Baypoint Schools. Although the Smith family moved from Denver, Mrs. Smith continues to support many Colorado charities through her philanthropy.

The Iris and Michael Smith Clinics and Laboratories building at National Jewish is at the heart of the institution’s Road Ahead capital campaign, which aims to raise \$31.2 million for the new building, to purchase research equipment, and to hire new faculty members. The first two floors of the six-floor building will be dedicated to patient care, making it possible to expand and improve the adult clinics and the Gene and Ruth Posner Foundation Center for Pulmonary Rehabilitation. The top four floors will feature state-of-the-art research laboratories, which will house research programs focusing on asthma, allergy, immunology, inflammation and environmental and occupational health. The building will also house the Center for Environmental Health Research and Service, funded by the federal government.

National Jewish is the only medical and research center in the United States devoted entirely to respiratory, allergic and immune system diseases, including asthma, tuberculosis, emphysema, severe allergies, AIDS, cancer, and autoimmune diseases such as lupus. Founded in 1899, National Jewish is dedicated to enhancing prevention, treatment and cures through research, and to developing and providing innovative clinical programs for treating patients regardless of age, religion, race or ability to pay.

National Jewish was recently ranked the number one respiratory hospital in the nation for the seventh consecutive year by *U.S. News & World Report*.

National Jewish is also recognized around the world for its excellence in research. Out of thousands of research institutions and pharmaceutical companies worldwide, National Jewish is ranked the 12th most influential research facility in molecular biology and genetics; 15th in biology and biochemistry; and 22nd in immunology.

National Jewish Health is the leading respiratory hospital in the nation. Founded 121 years ago as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish Health today is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the world to receive cutting-edge, comprehensive, coordinated care. To learn more, visit the media resources page.

Media Contacts

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