



IMPACT REPORT 2021

DREAM BIG

Change the course of lives and medicine





When we Dream Big, amazing things happen

The MUHC Foundation is proud to have reached the halfway point of its *Dream Big* Campaign.

The *Dream Big* Campaign to change the course of lives and medicine supports the priorities of the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC). The MUHC Foundation's \$200 million goal is key to transforming the MUHC, one of the world's most advanced teaching hospital networks, into a leading international hub for innovative clinical research and excellence in care.

The campaign focuses on top health care priorities, including infectious diseases, cancer, cardiovascular care and research. It also ensures the MUHC has one of the best skilled teams in Canada with access to state-of-the-art equipment and technology.

We are delighted to share with you, in the following pages, some of the amazing impact your donations have had. Thank you for dreaming big with us.

Sincerely,

Jean Charest
Campaign Co-Chair

Marc Parent
Campaign Co-Chair

Suzanne Legge Orr
Campaign Co-Chair

Infection and Immunity | Solve Humanity's Deadliest Puzzles

The McGill Interdisciplinary Initiative in Infection and Immunity (MI4) was created in 2017 to address the global threat of infection. It brings together over 250 researchers to find solutions to humanity's deadliest puzzles: tuberculosis, COVID-19, and the growing threat of antibiotic resistance. We are raising \$60 million to improve the health of people worldwide.



Lab technologists at the MUHC



Dr. Marcel Behr in the Level 3 Containment Lab

Taking on COVID-19

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in March 2020, the MUHC Foundation was ready. Your generous support of the COVID-19 Emergency Fund helped the MUHC Foundation raise over \$7 million to respond to this global health crisis, including \$4 million from the Hewitt Foundation, Trottier Family Foundation and the late Elspeth McConnell. This support funded over 50 projects to stop the coronavirus.

The MUHC's Level 3 Containment Lab

Working with live coronavirus is risky, and only specially designated labs—of which there are very few in Canada—can handle the virus. The MUHC's Level 3 Containment Lab (CL3), originally created to handle tuberculosis, quickly shifted to studying the SARS-CoV-2 virus last year. The CL3 team are now providing research support to labs and companies. Gifts to the COVID-19 Emergency Fund allowed lab director Dr. Marcel Behr to smoothly transition the MUHC's CL3 to study the coronavirus. This generous support leveraged a \$1 million grant from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI) to obtain new and specialized equipment, enabling cutting-edge virologic studies.



Suzanne Legge Orr and Jeffrey Orr

Legge Orr MI4 Leadership Award

Dream Big Campaign Co-Chair Suzanne Legge Orr and husband Jeffrey Orr donated \$1 million to create the Legge Orr MI4 Leadership Award. This new award will provide crucial funding to MI4 to ensure it has a strong leader who can drive forward the initiative's mission to find innovative solutions to some of the world's deadliest diseases: tuberculosis, hepatitis C, COVID-19 and more. The donation will support the leadership of MI4 now and in the future. Recognizing the importance of talented leadership, the Legge Orrs made an eight-year commitment to supporting MI4's director.



Dr. Abhinav Sharma

Pfizer Early Career Investigator Award

The Pfizer Early Career Investigator Awards enable two early career scientists per year to search for innovative solutions to infectious diseases. This new award was made possible thanks to a \$600,000 donation from Pfizer Canada. Dr. Abhinav Sharma received the award to study the optimal timing for giving the influenza vaccine to patients with heart failure. Dr. Ian Watson was chosen for his work on how melanoma differs in men and women to ensure patients receive personalized treatment.

Cardiology | Fix Broken Hearts

When a heart attack strikes. When a heart valve isn't working. When a tragedy leads to a lifesaving transplant... every heartbeat forever after is a triumph. We are raising \$50 million so that in ten years, Montreal will have the lowest rate of hospitalization and fewest deaths due to heart disease in Canada.



Nurse Wendy Wray, founder of WHHI

WHHI helps women take control of their health

When Cheryl Beck had a heart attack at age 53, she was shocked. Following her recovery, the Women's Healthy Heart Initiative (WHHI) helped her change her lifestyle to reduce the risk of a second heart attack. The WHHI is the first collaborative nurse-led women's heart disease prevention program in Canada. Its goal is to empower women to take control of their own heart health through awareness, education and prevention. This year, the WHHI received a gift of \$250,000 from the Estate of Herta Vodstrcil. The gift ensures that the WHHI remains free for participants like Cheryl, who today has the knowledge and tools to reduce her risk of having another heart attack.

Courtois Cardiovascular Signature Program launches

The Courtois Cardiovascular Signature Program, a 10-year study to better understand the risks for developing cardiovascular disease, launched in 2020. The program is pioneering tomorrow's precision medicine in cardiovascular diseases by mapping our signatures—things that make us unique like genetics, lifestyle and more. The study is possible thanks to a transformative \$18M gift from the Courtois Foundation.

MyHeart Counts Canada

MyHeart Counts Canada is a smartphone app that will allow users to see how their physical activity and lifestyle affect their cardiovascular health. Modeled on a Stanford University app of the same name, the app will track users' physical activity via their phone or wearable fitness tracker, and provides assessments that measure risk and teach users how to improve their heart health. It also provides data to researchers to help them better understand how to keep hearts healthy. MUHC cardiologist Dr. Abhinav Sharma is leading the creation of MyHeart Counts Canada thanks to support from Canso Investments, Munich RE and a LEAP Canada grant.

Cancer | End Cancer

Your grandfather. Your aunt. Your best friend. Your dad. Your sister. You. Not one person is untouched by this disease. In 2018, 9.8 million people worldwide died from cancer, including 82,000 Canadians. We have a plan to end cancer: we will catch it early. Understand it down to its genetics. Discover its weaknesses. We are raising \$35 million to end cancer.



Kirandeep Kaur and Baljeet Singh Sidhu

Young woman's wish granted

Kirandeep Kaur came to Canada to study business. A strong and determined young woman, she and her husband Baljeet Singh Sidhu left India to begin a life in Canada. But Kirandeep and Baljeet's dream was not to be.

In December 2020, Kirandeep was diagnosed with cancer. Despite chemotherapy, she was admitted to the MUHC multiple times with complications. Surgical oncologist Dr. Sinziana Dumitru saw her each time, and realized there was nothing more anyone could do to save her. Kirandeep was dying.

Realizing that she would die half a world away from her family, Kirandeep was determined to go home to India. But the odds were stacked against her: the trip is

not just a 14-hour flight to Delhi, but another 8 hours by train to Punjab. The medical team was unsure whether she would survive the trip.

The MUHC surgical oncology team looked at every option to send Kirandeep home. She was too weak to travel alone, and transport by air ambulance was prohibitively expensive. Finally, they called MUHC Foundation President and CEO Julie Quenneville.

Moved by Kirandeep's story, Julie called Mark Smith, France Chrétien and André Desmarais, all loyal donors. When they heard Kirandeep's heartbreaking story, they quickly took action. They not only donated the funds for Kirandeep to return home, but organized the entire journey. Dr. Dumitru called the MUHC Foundation on a Friday night, and by Tuesday, Kirandeep was home.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, Kirandeep's wish was granted.



Dr. Peter Metrakos

New partnerships improve cancer treatment

A new partnership with MEDTEQ+, the RI-MUHC, MIMs, and Caprion-HistoGeneX, respective leaders in cancer research, artificial intelligence (AI), and precision medicine, is helping increase survival of stage IV colorectal cancer patients. MUHC oncology surgeon and researcher Dr. Peter Metrakos and his team are improving survival rates of patients diagnosed with stage IV colorectal cancer by using AI to create personalized treatments for each individual.

Similarly, a generous \$250,000 gift from Pomerleau, matched by MEDTEQ+, is helping cancer researchers Dr. Peter Metrakos and Dr. Anthoula Lazaris gain new insights into colorectal cancer and how to treat it.

Using local engineering expertise in artificial intelligence, Dr. Metrakos' work will significantly improve survival rates of patients diagnosed with stage IV colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in Canadians and is incredibly deadly, with a five-year survival rate of only 12%.

“Our goal is to understand each individual’s cancer so we can provide precise and personalized treatment. Having support from Quebec industry means we can make these treatments a reality.”

—Dr. Peter Metrakos, Cancer Research Program Lead, RI-MUHC

Using liquid biopsy techniques, Drs. Metrakos, Lazaris and their team will separate DNA, RNA, proteins and other constituent parts of the blood, to identify the ones associated with a patient’s cancer. Artificial intelligence (AI) will be used to identify patterns and insights into the data gathered from each patient’s blood sample.

DOVEE | Stop the Silent Killer

Ovarian and endometrial cancers are silent killers, seldom presenting symptoms until it is too late. The sooner these cancers are detected, the more likely they are to be survivable. Gynecologic oncologist Dr. Lucy Gilbert has the answer: the DOVEEgene test. As routine as a pap smear, this minimally invasive test can detect cancer using DNA analysis before it becomes a death sentence. It's a historic discovery, one that could save millions of lives. And it's made in Quebec. Together, we raised \$2 million to support DOVEE.



Julie Snyder

No More Women Lost Campaign

The MUHC Foundation teamed up with Quebec media personality Julie Snyder, host of *La semaine des 4 Julie*, to ensure there are *No More Women Lost* to ovarian and endometrial cancers. The campaign raised over \$150,000 toward the final clinical trial of the DOVEEgene test to ensure this historic, made-in-Quebec discovery becomes a standard part of women's care. Taking place over two months, the campaign included features on Snyder's show.



Jean-Pierre Léger

Leading Quebec family joins fight against ovarian cancer

Jean-Pierre Léger and the Léger Family Foundation are committed to helping make ovarian and endometrial cancers detectable and curable. Léger, a leading Quebec philanthropist and former president of Rotisserie St. Hubert, generously donated \$100,000 to the MUHC Foundation's DOVEE campaign. This generous donation will help fund the final stage of the DOVEE phase 3 clinical trial in Montreal. The Léger Family joins the Medcart/Epiderma network, Raymond James and BMO, among others, in supporting this ground-breaking research.



Joanne Photiades

Lyceum of Greek Women of Montreal fundraises for DOvEE

The Lyceum of Greek Women of Montreal raised over \$31,000 with their virtual fundraiser, the Joanne and Melina Virtual Event, featuring Dr. Lucy Gilbert and Canadian Minister of Health Patty Hajdu.

The event included heart-wrenching testimonials from cancer survivor Joanne Photiades and Melina Tsagaropoulos. The women provided honest and emotional accounts of their cancer journeys and of becoming mothers following treatment. Featuring opening remarks by Canada's Minister of Health Patty Hajdu, the event included a Q&A with Dr. Lucy Gilbert about her ground-breaking DOvEEgene test. All donations are funding the test's final clinical trial.



Cary and Ronda Green

A gift to honour a mother lost

After losing his wife Ronda to ovarian cancer, Cary Green gave \$50,000 in support of the DOvEE project to ensure other families don't lose a loved one to this silent killer.

Ronda was a loving mother of three and a new grandmother. She loved golf, skiing, traveling, entertaining and playing mahjong, but above all, she loved spending time with her family and friends. Like so many women, Ronda was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in the late stages of the disease. Cancers of the ovaries and endometrium rarely present symptoms, meaning that most women don't realize something is wrong until it is too late. The Green Family's gift will help ensure more women are diagnosed earlier so that other families don't lose a loved one to ovarian cancer.

Respiratory | Breathe Easier

In February 2021, the MUHC Foundation launched the *Dream Big. Breathe Easier* campaign to raise \$10 million to support breathtaking research and breath-giving care. The campaign will focus on four pillars: Excellence in patient care, home monitoring, research innovation grants and a respiratory clinical trials program. This ambitious campaign will ensure the Montreal Chest Institute (MCI) continues to provide cutting-edge care to its patients.



Dr. Ben Geboe

Dr. Margaret Becklake Fellowship: supporting emerging researchers

The Dr. Margaret Becklake Fellowship supports the research and training of an up-and-coming respiratory scientist from an Indigenous community or low- or middle-income country. Thanks to a generous \$250,000 gift from an anonymous donor, half of which will support the fellowship, the next generation of researchers in respiratory disease will receive the support they need to become experts.

Dr. Ben Geboe is passionate about preventing the spread of tuberculosis in Indigenous communities and amongst health care workers. As the newest Dr. Margaret Becklake Fellow at the Montreal Chest Institute, his work is empowering Indigenous peoples across Quebec to take control of their own health care and end the tuberculosis epidemic.



Joseph and Nick Bakish

Montreal brothers support new clinical trial to help prevent severe COVID-19

Brothers Joseph and Nick Bakish are taking a leadership role in the fight against the global pandemic, with a focus on developing countries that have had little access to vaccines.

The brothers are passionate about impact investing and are leading the way by contributing \$75,000 to the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) Foundation to kick start the Phase III clinical trial for a repurposed medication, PULM-001.

PULM-001 is a decades-old, safe and affordable oral antibacterial drug that has well-recognized anti-inflammatory properties. The repurposed drug will be administered to symptomatic adults recovering at home to lessen lung inflammation.

“This is a unique opportunity to invest in a safe and affordable treatment that can prevent thousands from getting severely ill with COVID-19. My brother Nick and I believe deeply in what can be achieved through research and innovation. We are proud to contribute to the MUHC Foundation to launch this next step in a ground-breaking clinical trial.”

—Joseph Bakish, Director, Wealth Management, Portfolio Manager, Investment Advisor of Bakish Wealth at Richardson Wealth Ltd.

The drug is expected to prevent severe COVID-19 by blocking the inflammatory response. The clinical trial, led by the Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre (RI-MUHC) and Canadian start-up Pulmonem, will test the use of PULM-001 in patients in the early stages of COVID-19.

Skills and Simulation | Build Canada's Best Skilled Team

As a leader in education, the MUHC is committed to the continued growth of current and future health care providers. The complexity of patient care has made the need for collaboration between health professionals essential. If health care providers work as a team, they must practice as a team.

Simulation training essential to COVID-19 care

The MUHC was able to retrain its staff in COVID-19 protocols thanks to a generous gift of simulation equipment and funding from CAE. Simulation training with life-like mannequins helped ensure staff were prepared to handle the pandemic.

When a patient goes into cardiac arrest, everyone springs into action. Just like in a medical drama, physicians and nurses rush to the bedside at the call of “Code Blue,” airways are checked and chest compressions begin. COVID-19 completely changed this. With such high risk of transmission to health care staff, COVID-19 presented a challenge: physicians and nurses could no longer rush to the bedside to assist a crashing patient. First, they had to don full protective gear. Pausing to put on PPE when a life is at stake is not easy. But this essential step could be a matter of life and death in itself: if an essential health care worker becomes ill, they cannot save lives. If they become critically ill, they could die.

To implement these new Code Blue measures, the MUHC turned to simulation training. Hundreds of staff received training using life-like simulation mannequins donated by CAE. Recognizing the need for



MUHC staff use a simulation manikin.

on-site simulation training at the MUHC, CAE donated \$500,000 in funding and equipment to the MUHC’s Skills and Simulation Network in early 2020. Little did they know that this equipment would prove essential to training the MUHC’s staff in pandemic procedures.

Giving lifesaving skills a boost

The Interprofessional Skills and Simulation Network is boosting lifesaving skills and teamwork across the MUHC thanks to a \$500,000 gift from SNC-Lavalin. The donation will increase access to simulation training for health care teams. Simulation training involves creating true-to-life patient scenarios using high-tech simulation mannequins to allow health care workers to practice their skills before they perform them on real patients. SNC-Lavalin’s gift will ensure MUHC staff maintain their skills.

Breast Cancer | Revolutionize Treatment and Care

Thanks to better screening and therapies, breast cancer isn't the force it once was. Far fewer Canadian women die of the disease than did 20 years ago. But it's not enough: 5,000 Canadian women will succumb to this terrible disease this year alone. The MUHC is raising funds to not only save the lives of women with breast cancer, but enrich them.

Dr. Sarkis Meterissian shaves his head for Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Dr. Sarkis Meterissian, Director of the Breast Clinic at the MUHC, dyed his hair pink and shaved his head as part of Raise Craze 2021, all in the name of supporting the Breast Clinic Wellness Program. A select group of patients and supporters wearing pink masks gathered outside the MUHC to witness the event. It was an emotional moment when Dr. Meterissian's locks fell to the floor—this caring gesture resonated with the many women who have struggled with losing their hair following a cancer diagnosis.

Dr. Meterissian surpassed his \$200,000 goal for a total of over \$300,000 raised! The donations will ensure the MUHC's breast cancer patients continue to receive whole-person care in the form of counselling, nutritionists, exercise kinesiologists and more. Thank you to donors Conchita Gonzalez and Sunil Panray, the Vartan and Lise Toroussian Foundation, Pfizer, Grant and Kathy Gehlsen, Felicia and Arnold Aaron Foundation, AstraZeneca, Gilead, and Mr. Puffs. Special thanks to the Avon Foundation for Women Canada for donating a \$100,000 matching gift.



Dr. Sarkis Meterissian

Yvon Michel Foundation supports metastatic breast cancer research

For Stéphanie Drolet, president and founder of the Yvon Michel Foundation, helping women recover from metastatic breast cancer is a very personal goal. Having lost her mother to the disease, Stéphanie's mission is to provide hope to women with the illness. The Yvon Michel Foundation donated \$117,800 to enable oncologist Dr. Peter Metrakos to find new treatments for metastatic breast cancer. Metastatic cancer occurs when the cancer moves to other parts of the body, and is difficult to treat. With the support of the Yvon Michel Foundation, Dr. Metrakos and his team are pursuing several new possible treatments for this deadly disease.

Other Priorities |



Patient Care Attendants Suleika Pardales and Sheila Small



The Chamandy Foundation

\$2.25 million donation to support nurses at the MUHC

The estate of Herta Vodstrcil left a \$5 million donation to the MUHC Foundation in support of various departments at the MUHC, including \$2.25 million to support the enhancement and training of nurses. The gift will support a number of new initiatives, including a nurse rapid response team that will deploy anywhere in the hospital to ensure at-risk patients receive medical interventions before their health deteriorates. It will also create the Nursing Innovation Fund, providing seed funding to nurses to carry out projects that could advance the profession of nursing.

The remaining funds will support a surgical “prehabilitation” program, the process of preparing a patient for surgery before the procedure rather than helping them rehabilitate afterward; women’s heart health; and new technology to aid cardiovascular and gastrointestinal surgery.

Transforming the lives of people with severe allergies

Approximately 15% of Canadians live with a food allergy. These debilitating and sometimes life-threatening reactions leave those affected constantly worried about encountering foods like peanuts, eggs, shellfish and others. With the help of a transformative gift of \$1,275,000 from the Chamandy Foundation, Dr. Bruce Mazer is working to change this. The gift enabled Therapeutic Objective is Tolerance in Food Allergy (TOTAL), an initiative to improve therapeutic options for those living with severe food allergies. Today, TOTAL is helping patients overcome life-threatening food allergies.



Amy Lorincz uses the TSOP platform

Reducing clinic waiting times with telemedicine

A team of researchers at the MUHC are in the midst of developing the Telemedicine Scheduling Optimization Project (TSOP), which aims to improve access to health care across Canada through technology. The project is providing patients with easy access to hospitals and clinics through online virtual consultations. The research team uses artificial intelligence algorithms that analyze the data collected during virtual consultation times so that scheduling can be optimized to reduce wait times.

This project would not be where it is today without the support of TD Bank Group. TSOP was awarded a \$350,000 TD Ready Challenge grant for its unique and innovative way of addressing the gaps that exist in health care accessibility and determining what needs to be done to fill those gaps during and after the pandemic.

\$1M gift to Cellular Therapy Lab enables creation of new treatments

The transformative support of Charles Benjamin enabled the creation of the Cellular Therapy Lab (CTL) at the Research Institute of the MUHC. The CTL creates and tests new treatments using stem cells to treat everything from bone loss to cerebral palsy to cancer. Stem cell therapies hold much promise for the treatment of a wide range of diseases and with Mr. Benjamin's support, the CTL is at the forefront of discovery.

Database optimizes care for organ transplant patients

The MUHC's Multi-Organ Transplant Database gives transplant surgeons, nurses and pharmacists access to health information that is essential to helping them make critical care decisions. For example, information in the database can be used to help the medical team match patients to donor organs, update the transplant waiting list, and determine whether an organ is at risk of rejection. Thanks to the support of generous donors to the MUHC, the Multi-Organ Transplant Database continues to ensure that patients receive lifesaving organ transplants.

Thank you

The doctors, nurses, health care professionals, researchers and patients of the MUHC thank you for your generosity. With your help, we are taking quality health care and elevating it to the level of excellence. You can be proud of what we have accomplished together, and we hope you look forward to even more amazing stories as we continue toward our \$200 million goal.