



PRESS RELEASE

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**DORIS DUKE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION**

Medical Research Program

DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION PROVIDES CRITICAL SUPPORT FOR AIDS RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

Two Grants Totaling \$3.75 Million Seek to Build Long-Term Clinical Research Capacity in South Africa; Programs Will Develop South African HIV/AIDS Investigators and Foster Collaborative Research

NEW YORK, NY, June 26, 2002 – The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) announced today that it has awarded two grants to Massachusetts General Hospital - totaling \$3.75 million - to expand HIV/AIDS clinical research capacity within South Africa. These grants mark the first major investments by DDCF in the area of international health.

The first grant (\$1.5 million) will enable the University of Natal's Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine in Durban, South Africa, to build a new research facility that will be the first of its kind in the South African province of KwaZulu-Natal. The second grant (\$2.25 million over four years) will create an HIV Pathogenesis Program that will enhance research, training, and collaborative efforts between clinical researchers at Harvard Medical School and the University of Natal. This bi-national program will allow researchers to better understand the evolution of the HIV virus in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the immune response of South Africans to the strains of virus that are causing the rapid spread of infection in Africa. These findings will be relevant to the development of HIV/AIDS vaccines and treatment strategies.

"Expanding clinical research capacity in countries most severely affected by the AIDS epidemic is crucial. We hope that these grants will spur additional investment in the public health infrastructure of southern Africa and other parts of the world," said Joan E. Spero, president of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

Construction of New HIV/AIDS Clinical Research Facility

The \$1.5 million grant supporting the construction of a new Medical Research Institute at the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine marks the DDCF's first direct investment in the clinical research infrastructure in Africa. This new facility will house the HIV Pathogenesis Program, which is funded by the second grant described below, as well as ongoing research at the medical school that is being supported by other foundations such as the Wellcome Trust and the Pediatric AIDS Foundation.

The Medical Research Institute, which is expected to be completed in the spring of 2003, will be the first new research building built at the medical school in almost 50 years. During South Africa's era of apartheid, the medical school at the University of Natal (now called the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine) was the first medical school in South Africa that trained non-white

medical students. It is also the only medical school located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, the province with the highest estimated prevalence of HIV infection in pregnant women in South Africa (33 percent, as compared to an estimated 25 percent nationally). It is estimated that between 4.8 million and 6.4 million people are currently infected with HIV in South Africa.

David Maughan Brown, Acting Vice-Chancellor of the University of Natal, said, "Through the new Medical Research Institute, the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine plans to increase the efficacy with which it meets the pressing health challenges of our time, particularly those presented by the current HIV/AIDS epidemic."

Strengthening the Clinical Research Infrastructure Within South Africa

The DDCF's second grant of \$2.25 million over four years will support an HIV Pathogenesis Program, a multi-disciplinary collaboration between American and South African researchers at the Partners AIDS Research Center at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School, and the University of Natal's Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine. The co-leaders of the program are Bruce D. Walker, M.D., Director of the Partners AIDS Research Center; Philip Goulder, M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine at Partners AIDS Research Center; and Hoosen (Jerry) Coovadia, M.D., Professor of HIV/AIDS Research at the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine.

Although based primarily at the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine, the HIV Pathogenesis Program will support research and training collaborations at other sites in Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa. This program seeks to enhance the research and training opportunities for young South African clinical investigators who will be the future leaders of the struggle against HIV/AIDS in southern Africa.

Bruce D. Walker, M.D., director of the Partners AIDS Research Center at Massachusetts General Hospital, said, "This grant will place a major AIDS research institute exactly where it needs to be, at the heart of the AIDS epidemic, and will provide necessary resources to a pool of promising African AIDS investigators. With new funding for treatment coming from the United Nations Global AIDS Fund and other sources, it is more important than ever before to have the scientific research backing to be able to ensure that we are developing the best possible methods to combat HIV/AIDS where it is spreading most rapidly."

Jerry Coovadia, M.D., Professor of HIV/AIDS Research at the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine and an internationally renowned AIDS researcher, said, "Over the years, we have come to realize that the AIDS epidemic in our country is such an overwhelming catastrophe that we need the support of the global community as much as that of all our people. Nothing less will do if we are to discover and apply relevant measures to halt and reverse the tide of this fatal disease."

About the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation

Established in 1996, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation seeks to improve the quality of people's lives by nurturing the arts, protecting and restoring the environment, seeking cures for diseases, and helping to protect children from abuse and neglect. The foundation supports four national grantmaking programs and oversees three properties that were owned by Doris Duke in Hillsborough, New Jersey; Newport, Rhode Island; and Honolulu, Hawaii. The foundation's assets totaled approximately \$1.4 billion as of December 31, 2001. Additional information on the foundation can be found at www.ddcf.org.