A NEW CHAPTER

AN ALUMNUS’S RECORD-SETTING SUPPORT FOR THE FUTURE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION SETS A NEW HORIZON FOR HIS ALMA MATER.

On the afternoon of September 23, a large crowd of faculty, staff, students, administrators, and guests of the University of Vermont celebrated the announcement of an estate commitment with an estimated current market value of $66 million from UVM dual-degree alum and Vermont native Robert Larner ’59, M.D. ’62, and his wife, Helen. The commitment to donate — the largest gift ever to a public university in New England — capped decades of philanthropic support from the Larners, whose lifetime giving now will now reach $100 million.

To recognize and express gratitude for their extraordinary commitment to medical education at UVM, the University of Vermont Board of Trustees voted earlier in September to name the College of Medicine in honor of Dr. Larner. The medical school is now known as The Robert Larner, M.D. College of Medicine at The University of Vermont. When realized and combined with previously announced gifts from the Larners, the bequest will vastly accelerate the Larner College of Medicine’s ability to reach the institutional goal inspired by Dr. Larner — to be recognized as second to none for medical education worldwide.

The Larner’s gift marks an important moment in the history of U.S. medical schools: the first occasion in the nation for which a medical school is named to honor an alumnus physician and donor.

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Completing this transformation will not be easy or inexpensive. That is why the Larners’ gift is so important to our College. It will fuel this transformation. The gift announced today will unleash the creativity and fire in the belly of our faculty to provide our students with a medical education which is unquestionably second to none.

**AN ALUMNA’S VIEW:**

Mildred “Mimi” Reardon, M.D.’67 (speaking at the naming ceremony)

As an alumna who spent her career in this community, I could not be more proud to be here celebrating Dr. Larner’s commitment to our shared alma mater. He has often said that his medical education from UVM served as the foundation for his success. That, along with his deeply-held belief that philanthropy should be used to inspire others and his delight in the accomplishments of UVM medical students, have made him an inspiration to many.

Over the years, Dr. and Mrs. Larner have clearly demonstrated their commitment to these tenets with their support of the College. Today, they have left no doubt exactly how deeply they believe in the value of a UVM medical education and how committed they are to making sure the students who enter the College each year will receive an education second to none.

**A STUDENT’S VIEW:**

Soraiya Thura ’18 (speaking at the naming ceremony)

By so generously giving to support medical education in a sustainable way, Dr. Larner has a hand in shaping the future of medicine for myself and my classmates, and for generations to come. I can say with confidence, that this is the best equipped medical school in the nation to meet the challenges of an ever-changing health care landscape. This is because UVM is home to individuals who work so hard to learn, to improve, and to dedicate their lives so selflessly to the care of other people. I know this is true because I have been fortunate enough to get to know so many of you in this room personally. And I believe that it’s this drive to give back and inspire others that is in Dr. Larner’s DNA, but in each of our DNA as well. THIS is the common thread that will make our education “second to none.”

Today, I know without a doubt that Dr. Larner believes in me. He believes in every student standing behind me; every alumnus who was ever a student here; and thanks to this incredibly generous gift, every student who walks through this door to begin their medical education will know he believes in them too. Thank you, Dr. Larner, for providing countless opportunities for us to be the best physicians we can be, at the University that we love, and will always remember.

Robert Larner’s nearly 80-year relationship with The University of Vermont began during his childhood in Burlington’s Old North End, where he was born in 1918, one of seven children of a local roofer. He received his elementary education at the H.O. Wheeler School on Archibald Street, and graduated from Burlington High School in 1936. The only one of his siblings to go to college, he attended UVM in part thanks to two scholarships he received for debating and essay writing. After graduating from the UVM College of Medicine, he served in World War II, settled in the Los Angeles area to build a successful medical practice, and invested in the burgeoning Southern California commercial real estate market.

“I GIVE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT COLLEGE OF MEDICINE BECAUSE THE EDUCATION I RECEIVED HERE MADE EVERYTHING GREAT THAT FOLLOWED IN MY LIFE POSSIBLE. I’M HUMBLED THAT THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT HAS DECIDED TO NAME THE MEDICAL COLLEGE IN MY HONOR, BUT I’M EQUALLY GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPACT THE FUTURE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TO INSPIRE OTHERS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS EXCEPTIONAL INSTITUTION WHICH IS TRULY SECOND TO NONE.”

— Robert Larner, ’39, M.D.’42

View videos of the ceremony and a short look at the life of Dr. Larner.

Go to: uvm.edu/medicine/vtmedicine