Knight Billion Dollar Challenge
Frequently Asked Questions

Is this the largest pledge ever made to advance cancer research?
A $500 million gift would rank among the largest ever made by an individual to advance a single program at a public institution.

What will this billion dollar investment accomplish?
It will help us finish the job we started when research by Brian Druker, M.D., proved it was possible to shut down mutated cancer cells without harming healthy ones. This was proof that molecularly targeted cancer therapies can work. With this breakthrough it was clear that the key to stopping cancer is understanding how it works and how it starts. A $1 billion investment will enable OHSU researchers to expand upon this knowledge and continue to build vital collaborations with the scientists, institutions and industry partners who will together make an all-out stand against cancer. We plan to use these funds to make significant strides in early detection by bolstering our investments in imaging, bioinformatics and clinical trials.

What has been the impact of Phil and Penny Knights’ previous gifts to the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute?
In 2008, Phil and Penny Knight contributed $100 million to the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. Those dollars helped bring together world-class researchers and core resources and sparked new partnerships with collaborators and with industry that have made possible the breakthrough science that has brought us to this moment.

I’ve heard that cancer will never be beaten because it’s too complex. Why spend all this time and money on it?
Cancer has been beaten — some of the time — and our understanding of cancer is rapidly increasing. However, we all know that it is a particularly intractable disease, and we know that more than 12 million people are diagnosed with cancer worldwide each year. That number will balloon as the world’s population ages. Defeating cancer would mean reducing or eliminating incalculable human suffering and freeing up human and financial capacity for the world. The successes to date teach us that cancer can and will be defeated.

Is OHSU doing this alone?
No. Partnerships are essential. Our leadership is helping us build collaborations with the world’s leading
universities, research institutes and laboratories, non-profit organizations, philanthropists, innovative companies and governments. OHSU along with institutions across the world are building real momentum.

**Will OHSU science now be all about cancer?**
No. The science and partnerships that will be advanced by this effort will accelerate our ability to prevent and combat other diseases. Knowledge isn’t a zero sum game. Each piece builds on others geometrically in ways we can’t even imagine today. OHSU’s groundbreaking work in neurosciences, the origins of disease, cardiovascular health, infectious disease and other critical areas will continue and be enhanced by exceptional new shared resources and the influx of scientific talent to OHSU.

**Will you be able to raise the additional $500 million to complete this challenge?**
Yes. Bold visions inspire big philanthropy, and this vision is world-class. We are in the process of planning a national fundraising effort to match or exceed the Knights’ extraordinary commitment.

**What will the “challenge” aspect of this pledge be beneficial for fundraising efforts?**
Yes. The way the Knights chose to make their pledge will galvanize interest and momentum. We believe it will motivate others to make larger commitment earlier than they might have otherwise.

**What will you do if you don’t get the money?**
We’ll get it. We are developing a strong plan for our campaign and have exceptional leadership at our Foundation. We also believe that the unprecedented vote of confidence by the Knights will motivate and energize potential funding partners – from industry to governmental partners to individuals and grant-making foundations. The goal is too important to fail. It’s time for all of us to work together to end cancer as we know it.

**Will this effort take away from fundraising for other important OHSU programs?**
The high-energy environment of teamwork and momentum that this opportunity creates will provide an ideal landscape for launching a university-wide fundraising campaign to help support other big ideas born at OHSU. We will accelerate our planning for this important effort.