For nearly 30 years, Friends of Doernbecher has been a stalwart and valued partner in promoting hope and healing at OHSU Doernbecher Children’s Hospital. This all-volunteer organization, comprised of five chapters across Oregon and southwest Washington and led by a committed board of directors, has been tireless in its efforts to raise funds and increase awareness for an array of programs and projects that make a transformative difference in the lives of Doernbecher patients and their families.

Thanks to the advocacy and support of dedicated Friends of Doernbecher volunteers, countless children are leading safer and healthier lives. We are pleased to present this report highlighting the myriad ways that financial grants from Friends of Doernbecher are advancing Doernbecher’s mission to meet the medical needs of all its young patients.
Friends of Doernbecher Grant Program

All money raised by Friends of Doernbecher is directed to the Friends of Doernbecher Grant Program, which **funds innovative projects and cutting-edge research that directly benefit current and future Doernbecher patients and families**. For 19 years, the grant program has provided seed-stage funding for faculty and staff in numerous specialties to pursue and develop relevant and impactful projects.

Proposals for funding are reviewed annually by Friends of Doernbecher volunteers and select Doernbecher Children's Hospital faculty. The program has funded more than 60 projects, totaling nearly $2 million.

“Every dollar contributed to the Friends of Doernbecher Grant Program drives innovation in crucial areas that fuel the future of pediatric medicine. Donors who support this pivotal program make it possible for Doernbecher faculty and staff to propel their cutting-edge ideas into practice and produce better patient outcomes for many young lives.”

— Cindy McEvoy, MD, MCR, Professor of Pediatrics, Division of Neonatology, OHSU School of Medicine, and faculty liaison for the Friends of Doernbecher Grant Program

Friends of Doernbecher Grants at Work

**Michael Silberbach, MD**  Professor of Pediatrics, Division of Cardiology, OHSU School of Medicine and Director, Children’s Cardiac MRI Program

**Project Funded: 3D Printing: A Novel Way to Create Surgical ‘Roadmaps’ of Malformed Hearts**

In 2014, Dr. Silberbach received a Friends of Doernbecher grant that made it possible to purchase the advanced 3D printing technology needed to initiate the 3D heart printing program at Doernbecher Children’s Hospital. This transformative technology provides cardiac surgeons with new ways to understand a child’s complicated heart defect to make more informed operative decisions. It has saved lives, showing anatomical characteristics of the heart that can’t be captured with other imaging techniques. This level of detail also gives patients and families a better understanding of the problem, why surgery is needed and how the operation will help.

The grant also created a library of printed hearts with congenital cardiac malformations to serve as a valuable teaching tool for students, residents and cardiology fellows. Just this year, Dr. Silberbach and his team presented their research results at a major international meeting, and are currently collaborating with biomedical engineers to develop “personalized” bioprosthetic aortic valves with tools obtained through the generous Friends of Doernbecher Grant Program.
Dr. Durham received a Friends of Doernbecher grant in 2012 for the Doernbecher Pediatric Audiology Department to obtain loaner hearing aids, hearing aid supplies and specialized equipment to manage hearing loss.

Hearing loss is the most prevalent congenital birth defect and can significantly impact speech and language development, social and emotional development and literacy if not diagnosed and treated before six months of age. Due to budget cuts and stricter eligibility requirements through regional deaf and hard of hearing programs, many children and infants are left without access to hearing services. Access to treatment across the state has declined due to a shortage of audiologists with experience and a willingness to treat children, as well as insurance restrictions.

Thanks to the Friends of Doernbecher grant, the department has partnered with other audiologists in the community to offer assistance to more than 500 children throughout Oregon and Washington. With the ability to now offer hearing aid services, Doernbecher has streamlined and accelerated the transition from hearing loss diagnosis to intervention. Having access to loaner hearing aids has been critical in making sure infants and children are fit with hearing aids as early as possible while funding sources are being determined.

Life-changing Impact: Hazel’s story

Hazel is a fiercely independent and imaginative kid who loves singing, running around the family farm in Eugene and playing doctor. At just three-and-a-half-years-old, Hazel has already spent a great deal of time around doctors at Doernbecher since being diagnosed with Treacher Collins syndrome at birth.

In addition to experiencing serious complications due to a cleft palate, Hazel was born without fully developed ears and with conductive hearing loss. While she was in the neonatal intensive care unit, Hazel was visited by Dr. Heather Durham, who started discussing hearing devices with her family. Thanks to the Friends of Doernbecher Grant Program, Dr. Durham was able to fit Hazel with a loaner device that transmits sound vibrations through the skull when she was just two months old, which has been critical to her development.

"Starting Hazel with a hearing device at a young age was definitely one of the most important things for her development," said Hazel’s mom, Heather. "About a year ago, Hazel just really exploded with language, and I think that’s because we started off the way we did."

While Hazel still has a number of complicated surgeries ahead of her, she and her family are now looking forward with nervous excitement to her first day of preschool and remain grateful for all that the Friends of Doernbecher Grant Program made possible for her.

"I’d like to thank the Friends of Doernbecher for their support because it definitely changed Hazel’s life and made a huge impact," said Heather. "It’s not just a change for when she’s two months old — it’s a lifetime of change for her."
THANK YOU

The Friends of Doernbecher Grant Program is made possible by the Friends of Doernbecher volunteers and their generous supporters.

To learn more about getting involved with Friends of Doernbecher or give a gift in support of the Friends of Doernbecher Grant Program, please contact:

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