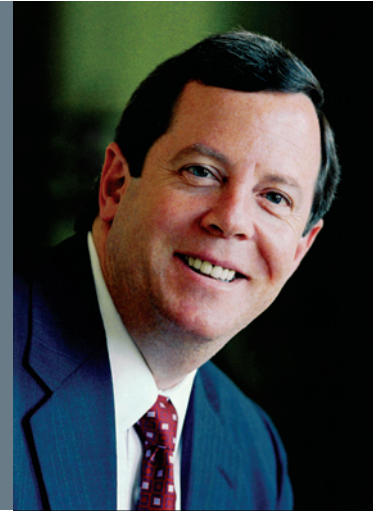


ADELBERT 216



The Billion Dollar Challenge

Stockholm in December is magical. I had the treat of traveling to this world capital during Nobel Week to talk to an international audience about how, through genomic medicine, the global population now stands on the threshold of an entirely new way of viewing, experiencing, and practicing healthcare.

Sometimes called “individualized” or “personalized” medicine, it’s a new concept—widely discussed but not yet developed—in which medical treatments might finally be tailored to each individual, according to that person’s unique biological makeup and medical history. Cleveland and Case, I put forth to the group, are in the unique position of helping to usher in this new era of medicine.

Among the prime reasons is Case’s School of Medicine: a single medical school serving a large metropolitan region, now linked in robust partnerships with every major healthcare provider in Northeast Ohio. This gives our researchers and clinicians access to a demographically diverse population of nearly 2.5 million people, the ideal research environment for moving our advances in basic medical science to the health of an entire population.

Case and Cleveland are about to become home to vast amounts of biomedical data and a collaborative research environment that together are not available anywhere else. The focal point of this effort is Case’s developing campus called the West Quad, which is where Cleveland will demonstrate that individualized medicine can fundamentally alter the practice of healthcare.

The West Quad—which recently dedicated its first new building, housing the Cleveland Center for Structural Biology and the Wright Fuel Cell Group—is another

example of how the research being conducted in Northeast Ohio is truly world class.

We can all agree on the importance of scientific research. It allows scientists to build upon existing knowledge and test new ideas, leading to great discoveries that benefit people worldwide. It is also a vital part of our economy. On the regional level, attracting more research grants can provide a firm foundation to build a better economy, attract new businesses along with the capital and people that come with them, create new jobs for diverse groups of people, and improve quality of life.

In Northeast Ohio, we are doing great research, but we are not doing enough. We want to and can do more. In 2004, Case research expenditures totaled \$231.8 million. When we calculate the research spending by Case and all other institutions in the region, the total is \$901.5 million.

I have called on all of the region’s research institutions to establish the billion-dollar mark as our goal for this year and, more importantly, to sustain it at that level annually. We’re almost at the tipping point: \$1 billion in annual research funding.

The West Quad, as a testing ground for the changes to come in medicine, is one bold example of how research is not done just for its own sake. With companies, foundations, and the public sector working together to support our efforts to bring more research funding into our region, we can meet our goal and reap the rewards. ☐

EDWARD M. HUNDERT, M.D., PRESIDENT

president-one@case.edu

PHOTOGRAPH BY GABRIEL AMADEUS COONEY