

Philanthropist Kimmel's vote of confidence



The new biomedical research tower, at the northwest corner of Ninth and Locust Streets, will bear the name of Sidney Kimmel's wife, Caroline. The site, now a parking garage, will contain 220,000 square feet of space with 12 floors devoted to research. Thomas Jefferson University

Jefferson will get \$70M for new tower



Sidney and Caroline Kimmel. "I just feel confident that I have the right team running this operation for us in Philadelphia," he said.

By Harold Brubaker
STAFF WRITER

Philanthropist Sidney Kimmel plans to donate \$70 million to Thomas Jefferson University to help pay for a \$340 million biomedical research building in Center City, a move designed to strengthen Jefferson's Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center and its broader research efforts, Jefferson said Thursday.

The new gift comes five years after Jefferson's medical college was named after Kimmel in recognition of a \$110 million donation. Kimmel, 91, has given away \$930 million of the fortune he made in fashion, including at least \$350 million in Philadelphia, his native city.

What brought Kimmel, who lives in

California, back to Jefferson with more money was confidence in the nonprofit's leadership, he said in an interview this week. In 1996, Kimmel gave \$10 million to the school's cancer center, which was then named after him.

"I am so impressed with our dear friend Steve Klasko, and at the same time with Karen Knudsen heading up the cancer center. I just feel confident that I have the right team running this operation for us in Philadelphia," he said.

The 220,000-square-foot building, with 12 floors devoted to research, will be named after Kimmel's wife, Caroline. It will replace the parking garage for the Jefferson Hospital for Neuroscience, which is on the northwest cor-

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ner off Ninth and Locust Streets. The project is in the very early stages, with no timeline for completion.

Jefferson president and chief executive Stephen K. Klasko said the research building was part of Jefferson's current five-year capital plan. "This is not something new, but we did not have all the dollars in our capital plan," he said. "Basically what this means is that this will accelerate it significantly." The plan calls for \$2 billion in spending through the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

Klasko described the new building as a key piece of what he called Jefferson's Locust Street Research Corridor. That includes Jefferson Alumni Hall at 1020 Locust St. and the Bluemle Life Science Building at 233 S. 10th St.

"We've always wanted to create as much of a campus down here, like Penn and others," Klasko said. "It's a little bit harder in Midtown because of the traffic flow. This will give us an opportunity to at least really start to create that Midtown campus."

Other changes underway at Jefferson, which has expanded dramatically through a half dozen acquisitions since Klasko arrived in 2013, include the move of 3,000 administrative jobs into the former Aramark Tower at Eleventh and Market Streets. The building now bears Jefferson's name.

As to research, the new building will accommodate an additional 56 principal investigators, which amounts to a 32 percent increase over the current level, Klasko said.

This year Thomas Jefferson University ranks 104th nationally for research funding from the National Institutes of Health. Its \$62.6 million total was the fourth-highest total in the Philadelphia region, behind the University of Pennsylvania, Chil-



The planned research building is seen as a key piece of what Jefferson's chief executive likens to a downtown version of Penn's campus. Thomas Jefferson University

dren's Hospital of Philadelphia, and Temple University.

Kimmel's \$110 million gift to the medical school in 2014 helped Jefferson secure matching funds to create 25 endowed professorships, bringing the school's total to 91, and 61 scholarships, giving the school a total of 232, Klasko said.

Kimmel said he is happy with Klasko's performance and jumped at the opportunity help pay for the new research building at Jefferson.

"Every time I speak to Steve, I've indicated how strongly I feel about having a major building," Kimmel said, mentioning his association with Baltimore's Johns Hopkins University, which has the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center. In 2001, Kimmel donated \$150 million to Johns Hopkins for cancer research.

"It's a large building, and everybody knows what this building's all about," Kimmel said of the Baltimore arrangement. In the late 1990s, Kimmel was in discussions with Jefferson about a donation for a building that would have added space for the cancer center, but that

didn't happen.


Now is the right time, Kimmel said, with more praise for Knudsen, who has been at Jefferson since 2007 and has led the cancer center since 2015.

"She's always there," he said. "She works hard. I'm so impressed with her energy. I just feel like we're on the cusp of greatness with this girl."

Kimmel's major gifts to Philadelphia institutions include:

- ▶ Kimmel Medical College — \$110 million.
- ▶ Caroline Kimmel Biomedical Research Building — \$70 million.
- ▶ Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts — \$63 million.
- ▶ Raymond and Ruth Perelman Jewish Day School — \$25 million.
- ▶ Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia — \$25 million.
- ▶ National Museum of American Jewish History — \$25 million.
- ▶ Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson — \$10 million.
- ▶ National Constitution Center — \$5 million.

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