



A PROPOSAL FOR

Jennifer and Wil VanLoh

APRIL 2018



Thank you for your continued dedication to Texas Children's Hospital. Your past support has done so much to help us fulfill our promise to provide the very best care to all children who come to us for help. We are honored that you are considering a gift to Texas Children's and are pleased to present the following opportunities.



Option 1:

Jennifer and Wil VanLoh Global Women's Health Fund

Women and children are disproportionately affected by lack of access to health care services, particularly in resource-limited settings. Malawian women have some of the worst odds with 675 deaths per 100,000 live births—among the highest maternal mortality ratios in the world. By contrast, the ratio for U.S. women is 14 deaths per 100,000 live births.

To improve these odds, Texas Children's Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine launched a Global Women's Health program in 2012 in partnership with the Ministry of Health of Malawi. This public-private partnership leads the way in the development of transformative programs that benefit thousands of women and babies as well as scores of learners in low resource settings.

A close collaboration with the Baylor International Pediatric AIDS Initiative (BIPAI) and Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation-Malawi has enabled sustained growth of the program in Malawi. With continued collaborative efforts, the impact of our programs will grow and become internationally recognized models.

Area 25 Health Center

Along with the Malawi Ministry of Health and Baylor-Malawi, Texas Children's is constructing a maternal and neonatal care facility at the Area 25 Health Center in Lilongwe to deliver unparalleled quality care for mothers and newborns in this low resource setting.

Currently, Area 25 Health Center performs only normal deliveries, with over 5,000 deliveries to date in 2018. Unfortunately, many women require referral to Kamuzu Central Hospital for cesarean delivery, and babies require referral for even minor neonatal issues. This referral hospital is overburdened, and transport is always risky.



Our solution has been to build a four-room operating theatre, which will open this summer. A dedication ceremony will take place on May 16, 2018. This will be followed rapidly by the construction of a new post-partum and neonatal unit, which will also include a care unit for premature babies, a laboratory and a blood bank.

The addition of these new buildings and services at Area 25 Health Center will significantly alleviate the burden of increasing demand for maternal and neonatal services at Kamuzu Central Hospital and Bwaila Maternity Hospital, which has the largest maternity unit in the region with 17,500 deliveries per year.

Area 25 also includes a maternal waiting home, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, where expectant mothers can stay prior to going into labor. Surrounding the facility is a vibrant permaculture garden. Permaculture is a system of sustainable agriculture that relies on patterns of natural ecosystems. In a country where the majority of people are small-scale farmers with a limited range of healthy crops, the garden provides a unique opportunity

to teach healthy crop cultivation, a skill the patients can use when they return home.

Electricity at the Area 25 facility is renewable, with a focus on solar power. Solar power will be backed up by generators and the local power grid, but we anticipate meeting most of the electricity needs for the facility by renewable energy.

Impact of your Gift

Texas Children's extensive experience in maternal and neonatal care in both the U.S. and sub-Saharan Africa will be critical in making this program a success. Once the new buildings at Area 25 open, we anticipate its operating budget to increase to approximately \$1.25 million a year. Continued philanthropic support for these efforts will ensure long-term sustainability of programs and continued operations even during times of financial stress. Support can take the form of current-use funds to be spent now or an endowed fund to help ensure the viability of the program in perpetuity.

Option 2:

Jennifer and Wil VanLoh Endowed Chair in Global Health Obstetrics and Gynecology

Here is a common birth scenario for women in Africa: A mother spends several days in labor that does not progress because the baby is not positioned properly. The baby dies, and the loss of circulation during this long and agonizing struggle leaves the mother with an obstetric fistula—a hole between the rectum or bladder and the vagina—leaving her chronically incontinent. Because of this, she is cast out by her family and community.

Obstetric fistula is very rare in the United States and other wealthy nations, and if it does happen, it is repaired quickly and easily. Sadly, however, it is all too common in the developing world. An estimated two million women in Africa live with obstetric fistula.

In Malawi, the maternal and infant mortality rates are very high, largely because there are not enough trained birth attendants. There are even fewer obstetricians. In the district hospital in the capital of Lilongwe, there are more than 13,000 deliveries per year; however, before 2011, there were no trained obstetricians. That all changed when Dr. Jeffrey Wilkinson arrived.



Dr. Jeffrey Wilkinson is vice chair of Global Health Obstetrics and Gynecology and fellowship director of the Global Women's Health Fellowship at Texas Children's Hospital. An accomplished surgeon who specializes in female pelvic reconstruction, he has personally completed more than 1,500 fistula repair surgeries in Niger, Tanzania and Malawi, with an overall success rate of 90%.

Dr. Wilkinson was integral to the establishment of the first residency program in Obstetrics and Gynecology in Malawi, which has already had an enormous impact on obstetrical care there and which will play an even larger role as the new operating arena at Area 25 opens. Under Dr. Wilkinson's guidance, Area 25 has the potential to change the paradigm for obstetrical care across much of Africa.

An Endowed Chair for Dr. Wilkinson

An endowed chair is often the best mechanism for an institution to recruit and retain extraordinary physicians. In fact, an endowed chair is typically the deciding factor to entice a distinguished doctor to leave his or her home institution—or convince him or her to stay. An endowed chair is one of the most tangible and effective ways Texas Children's can demonstrate its commitment to outstanding physicians and scientists.

The guaranteed funding provided by an endowed chair will provide Dr. Wilkinson with seed money to continue his extraordinary work in women's and infant health and will allow him to pursue potentially transformative projects that are too risky for federal agencies or major non-governmental organizations to fund at an early stage. These high-risk, high-reward projects, however, can later be leveraged to secure competitive federal or private grants.

Moreover, Texas Children's is a young institution, and while we are consistently rated among the top pediatric hospitals in the country, we fall behind in one key aspect: the number of endowed chairs we provide. Other highly regarded children's hospitals have significant endowments to provide this much-needed funding. For comparison:

Comparison of endowed chairs at peer institutions

#1 Boston Children's Hospital	97+
#2 Children's Hospital of Philadelphia	115+
#3 Cincinnati Children's Hospital	76+
#4 Texas Children's Hospital	18

(Rankings according to 2017 U.S. News & World Report)

With Sarah's internship, you and your family will have established a relationship with Dr. Wilkinson. An endowed chair will allow that relationship to continue for decades to come, with annual endowment and research reports and opportunities for you to visit with Dr. Wilkinson in Malawi and stateside. Once Dr. Wilkinson retires, we hope you would continue the relationship with his successor.

A gift of \$2 million, payable over several years if you wish, to establish an endowed chair will lay the foundation for continued research in women's and infant health. An endowed chair for Dr. Wilkinson will not only help us get closer to our peers, it will also be the hospital's first chair in Global Health. An endowed professorship may be established for \$1 million. It functions in exactly the same way as a chair, but provides a smaller annual spin-off.



Option 3:

The Jennifer and Wil VanLoh Innovation Fund

What if there were ways to change and save the lives of very sick babies, even before they are born? That is something that was simply not possible just a few years ago, but it is exactly what is happening at Texas Children's Fetal Center now.

Yet... what if even more lives could be saved? That is what will happen with your help.

At Texas Children's Hospital, we have highly-trained experts, a world class facility and limitless vision. We leverage these advantages to make a real difference in the lives of our patients and their families.

Texas Children's Fetal Center attracts parents from around the world who are seeking the most advanced care available. It is, in fact, one of only a few centers worldwide to offer the full spectrum of fetal therapies for complex conditions including craniofacial anomalies, cardiac issues, lung lesions, twin abnormalities, neural tube and spinal defects, and conditions of the brain, kidney and bladder.

Our specialists use technologically advanced procedures to diagnose health conditions in unborn children as early as possible. These surgeons are internationally recognized leaders in fetal medicine and in fetal and neonatal surgery, and they have pioneered innovative fetal procedures to address complicated issues like spina bifida and congenital diaphragmatic hernia.

The Challenges and the Need

Dr. Michael A. Belfort, OB/GYN-in-Chief at Texas Children's Pavilion for Women, and his team have performed such procedures successfully a number of times—but not with instruments designed specifically for fetal surgery. Rather, our surgeons and fetal interventionists—and others around the country—are using equipment and instruments that are designed for adults but have been adapted for use with children. Given the complexity of fetal surgeries and the limited space in which they are performed, specifically designed, purpose-built instruments will advance the field and improve outcomes.

Medical supply and technology companies develop, produce and distribute adult-sized catheters, stents, scissors and sutures, so it seems logical that they would be able to develop instruments and devices that are a quarter of the size. Unfortunately, it is not as simple as it may sound. These companies are seeking a return on their investment, along with a significant profit. Currently,

however, there are not enough fetal procedures performed in the United States for companies to invest in this kind of product development. Even though the number of such procedures is sure to increase over time, this will never be a market that is considered large enough or significant enough by major companies' standards—unless we do a great deal of work on the front end.

The Solution

With all these things in mind, we propose a unique opportunity to develop fetal surgery devices right here at Texas Children's Hospital.

Dr. Belfort has a passion for eliminating the workarounds that are being used currently and improving how these delicate procedures are performed. He and his team know that the ability to operate with smaller scissors, sutures, clamps and other devices will help make fetal procedures less invasive, facilitate faster recovery times for mothers and their babies, and improve outcomes. They are uniquely positioned to develop new fetoscopic surgery instruments and devices that will allow more sophisticated surgery inside the uterus.

Our surgeons, physicians and scientists know how these devices should work. Our plan is to leverage their expertise in using existing tools by partnering with engineers and machinists who are proficient in state-of-the-art computer software to complete preliminary designs. The electronically designed prototype can then be fed into a 3D printer, which can in turn produce a tactile version of an instrument or device.

The confluence of advances in both technology and medicine has brought us to a point where, with your support, we will be able to develop fully functioning devices that can be used as prototypes for larger production by big manufacturing companies. This process offers a substantial cost-savings and greater potential profit for the companies we would like to work with. It is also possible for Texas Children's to secure a patent on our work, which would generate funds that will be reinvested into device development and create sustainability for these efforts.

A gift of \$1 million will establish The Jennifer and Wil VanLoh Innovation Fund, which will position us to make a dramatic impact in the field of fetal surgery—and to improve, and even save—the lives of countless unborn children.

Bonus Surgery Option: Endowed Chair with Matching Funds

The talented physicians, surgeons and scientists at Texas Children's Hospital are at the core of our medical care, education and research mission. In order to recruit and retain the greatest talent, the Department of Surgery recognizes that its single greatest need is increasing its number of endowed chairs. This need provides a unique opportunity for donors who are interested in helping advance their innovative work in pediatric surgery.



Dr. William Whitehead is the director of the Clinical Research and Outcomes Program at Texas Children's Hospital. His practice focuses on congenital malformations, hydrocephalus, spina bifida, trauma, neuro-oncology, skull base surgery and minimally invasive endoscopic procedures.

The first neurosurgeon to participate in fetoscopic surgery, Dr. Whitehead was also an integral part of the Texas Children's team that performed the first two-port fetoscopic procedure to repair spina bifida in-utero. This innovative approach was developed by Dr. Whitehead and Dr. Belfort. Both doctors continue to develop new multidisciplinary approaches to treat patients with neurological disorders, and Dr. Whitehead works to train surgeons across the country in these techniques. This procedure is less invasive than an open surgery and reduces the risk for both the mother and fetus.

Dr. Whitehead is one of the founding members and principal investigators in the Hydrocephalus Clinical Research Network. He is also working very closely with the fetal intervention team in developing a technique for minimally invasive fetoscopic repair of myelomeningocele. Enrollment in this study is nearly complete, and we look forward to reporting one-year outcomes in 2020.

An Endowed Chair for Dr. Whitehead

An endowed chair for Dr. Whitehead will allow him to continue his revolutionary research in fetal surgery. With an investment from you of \$1.5 million, payable over four years, toward an endowed chair in Texas Children's Department of Surgery, we would be honored to partner with you by matching your gift with \$900,000. We will contribute \$500,000 to complete the \$2 million needed for an endowed chair and an additional \$100,000 per year for four years to ensure that the endowment is functionally active on the date of the first gift payment.





Thank You

We would be honored to have your family's partnership. Together, we can continue to create a healthier future for children and women throughout the world.



**Texas Children's
Hospital®**