



# Howell Highlights

A Quarterly Publication by the Doris A. Howell Foundation for Women's Health Research

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## The Howell Foundation Grants Committee

In 1996, the Doris A. Howell Foundation joined with the Soroptimist International of La Jolla (a community organization strongly supportive of women's health research) in sponsoring annual funding of promising UCSD student research projects in topics related to women's health. In 2000, the Doris A. Howell Foundation for Women's Health Research began funding CSU (California State University) undergraduates; in 2008, the Howell Foundation not only increased the awards from \$2,500 to \$3,000 but funded students from CSUPERB. (CSU Program for Education and Research in Biotechnology).

Madeline Butler, Ph. D. Division of Biological Sciences at UCSD, chairs the Howell Foundation Grants Committee consisting of eight members. Criteria were established for prospective students, their mentors, and the research project. All students submitting applications must be mentor-sponsored and supervised during the proposed research project which must be based on research that has not yet begun and will be completed within the year. Although research projects related to women's health are primary, issues affecting both sexes are considered; in fact, the range of these projects is exceptionally broad and covers much of the human life sciences. Because the focus of the grant program is to encourage undergraduate students to enter research in the field of women's health as a career, mentors are encouraged to nominate students with academic promise whose research in women's health issues may influence their future career goals. Follow-up data reveal that some senior students on graduation enter a Master's degree program, others a doctoral program, and some are recruited to industry.

Applications are received annually from UCSD, SDSU and CSUPERB in variable numbers. Applications are distributed to members of the Committee who independently evaluate and rate each application on its merits according to established criteria. The members submit their scores for each application they review. Dr. Butler then reconciles the ratings to establish the top contenders for the grants, sometimes requiring follow-up conferences with the members. When the list has been established, it is referred to the Committee again for consensus before being recommended to the Board of Directors of the Howell Foundation for final approval.

As is the custom, students are invited to present the results of their research at one of the luncheon meetings of the Howell Foundation. The Howell Foundation Grant program has functioned since 1996 and to date has funded 141 undergraduate scholars in their research for a total of \$330,000. In 2008 the Howell Foundation awarded \$36,000 to 12 scholars.

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Doris A. Howell Foundation for Women's Health Research is to fund undergraduate scientists in their relevant research and to educate women to be catalysts for better family health.

To make a donation, please call (858) 454-7797.

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### New Howell Circle Members

Thank you to all new and renewing Howell Circle members. Your support encourages undergraduates to pursue independent research.

**Betty Beyster**

**Estelle Loeb**

**Dorothy Sampson**

Although it takes all levels of giving to make our Foundation successful, those who contribute \$125 or more in a given year are extended membership in the Howell Circle.

You will have the satisfaction of knowing that your gift will make a positive impact on the health and well being of women, today and in the long-term.

Please use the enclosed envelope to join or renew your Howell Circle membership – or to make a tax-deductible gift in support of Howell Research Grants awarded to undergraduate students researching women's health issues.

## February Howell Luncheon Speaker



### DR. ERIC TOPOL ON "PERSONALIZED MEDICINE"

By Ruth S. Jacobowitz

The medicine of tomorrow is on its way today. That was the message of Eric J. Topol, M.D. who spoke at our February meeting. His topic "Personalized Medicine" struck at the core of what we all want to know. Dr. Topol is a medical visionary seeking to understand our DNA and to tracking its code. Today, for more than 50 common diseases (such as diabetes, heart attack, various cancers) the underpinning genes in the human genome have been found and it is our genome that accounts for our individual susceptibility to or protection from diseases. Every week more new disease-causing genes are found. That means that today's medicine has learned more about root causes of diseases than in the history of medicine. This means that we are approaching new ways to change medicine, to define diseases as well as ways to redesign drugs based on the root causes of disease. Then all medical textbooks will need to be rewritten so the patient can get individualized care. Medicine has already entered the era of Pharmacogenetics, realizing that all drugs do not work the same for all patients and seeking to know whether that drug will work on that particular patient. We are finally engaging a new era of better and more individualized medical care. *Dr. Eric J. Topol, a world renowned cardiologist, is Chief Academic Officer and Chief of Genomic Medicine and Translational Science for Scripps Health.*

## February Luncheon Hostess

Thank you to Judy White for serving as Honorary Luncheon Hostess at our February 18th luncheon at the La Jolla Country Club—our kickoff event for the 2009 Health Lecture Series. The event was a great success with over 100 attendees. Both Judy and her husband Jack have been strong supporters of the Howell Foundation since 2003 - personally funding three Howell Scholars and opening their home for a scholarship donor appreciation event in 2006. Our many thanks for their continual support of our efforts.



Jack White, Dr. Howell, Judy White

## Gift In Honor

Contributions to the Howell Foundation can be made as a general donation, "In Memory Of", "In Honor Of" or to celebrate special occasions.

- For contributions *in memory of* a loved one, please include the name of the person being remembered as well as the name and address of their family so we can send them notification of your memorial gift.
- For contributions *in honor of* a person or *in recognition of* a special occasion, please include the name and address of the person being honored so we can send them notification of your gift.

Notification of your donation will be in the form of a card acknowledging your gift to the Howell Foundation. All contributions are tax deductible. However, please consult with your personal tax advisor.

## A Conversation with Dr. Howell...

Our mission, as printed on the front page of this newsletter, is to fund undergraduate scientists in their relevant research and to educate women to be catalysts for better family health.

It is to the latter part of our mission that I wish to write today. As women we are the nurturers, the caretakers of our families which may include spouses, children and even parents. As caretakers our responsibilities are large and wide. The one commonality in care giving is that we are involved in the feeding and nutrition of our families. A good diet is an essential part of every person's life and health.

The average American diet is dominated by unhealthy fats and sugars. True, these foods are usually the fastest to obtain, often the cheapest option, and more convenient than purchasing and preparing more beneficial foods in the kitchen. However, the health costs in the alarming increase in obesity, diabetes and hypertension in the population, especially in children, is too high to continue.

I am not advocating a drastic change in diet. I am simply asking that each of us involved with the Howell Foundation begin to pay more attention to the foods we eat and offer to our families. Including a greater proportion of fruits and vegetables, reducing the intake of animal proteins and fats, increasing our water intake and reducing the volume of soft drinks and sugar-laden juices will do a lot toward improving health and achieving a good diet. These changes introduced gradually can become permanent habits. And it will be an excellent example for our children.

*Doris A. Howell, M.D.*  
and *Beatrice K. Rose, M.D.*



## Howell Scholar Alumni News

Kristina Cook was chosen as a Howell Scholar in 2004 and awarded \$2,500 for her research on "Novel Peptidomimetic Antibiotics designed to trap the Holliday Junction" - a very serious study of how best to design antibiotics by interfering with bacterial replication. Kristina received her B.S. in Biology from San Diego State University in 2005. She is currently a Ph.D. student at the prestigious NIH-Oxford scholars program and is expected to earn her Ph.D. in Dec 2009. She is publishing several papers on the HIF protein and its role in cancer and has made some very important breakthroughs on this work. She recently gave a presentation to 600 people at the American Cancer Research symposium.

♥ The Howell Foundation wishes to express particular gratitude to those who purchased Singing Opera Bears at our February Luncheon. The overwhelming enthusiasm and support for the project resulted in raising over \$2,500 for a Howell Scholarship.

## The Doris A. Howell Foundation for Women's Health Research Board of Directors

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**The Doris A. Howell Foundation  
for Women's Health Research Presents...**

**UPCOMING LUNCHEON!**

**May 28, 2009**

**12:00 noon (11:30 registration)**

**La Jolla Country Club**

**\$45 for Howell Circle Members**

**\$55 for Prospective members /  
guests**



Doris A. Howell, M.D.

**"Advances in Palliative Care"**

Dr. Howell will explain how targeted attention to pain and symptom control, physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual suffering, referred to as "palliative care" can bring relief and comfort to all patients and will greatly enhance the strained patient/doctor relationship.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**August 13, 2009**

**"What's New in Laser Surgery for the Skin?"**

Edward Ross, M.D., Director of the Scripps Clinic Laser and Cosmetic Dermatology Center in Carmel Valley, will present new advances in laser dermatology.



Edward Ross, M.D.

**Would you like to sponsor a Howell Scholar's lunch for \$45? Let us know when you make your reservation at (858) 454-7797.**

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