

Created for the Children's National Medical Center

This video was produced to raise funds for a National Center for Genetic Medicine at the Children's National Medical Center. The challenge for the video and companion brochure was to show the promise genomic medicine holds for new treatments and cures and inspire financial donors to support that effort. In addition to researching and writing the script, I also directed and produced the video.

LEGACY

NARRATOR- OPENING

We give them our all. Care for their needs and watch them grow. We see in their faces the promise of things to come. Our children are our legacy. And when they become sick, we'd do anything for them.

Imagine rushing your child here, to this house of healing. We count on places like the Children's National Medical Center to do their all. But what if your child's illness is caused by genetic factors, like heart disease, cancer, or mental illness? What then?

Half the diseases that afflict children are caused by broken or malformed genes. With genomic research, we can treat the genes and heal the child.

But where is the home for this important work? There is no Children's National Center for Genetic Medicine. Then what will we say to all those children waiting for a cure?

We can say there is hope. And that, if we can do what must be done, we will change the course of medicine for all time.

This will be our legacy.

Dietrich Stephan (Research Scientist)

Genomic research is the biggest thing to hit medicine since antibiotics came along. We can now really understand what causes disease for the first time. We can use the tools of genomic research to look at any type of disease and

we're doing that here in the Center. We're looking at over 100 different diseases that affect kids and we can study any type of pediatric disease here.

We can diagnose disease before we can even see it, in most cases, or before the person even has it. And we can really intervene in a smart way that doesn't just treat the symptoms. We can fix the disease or start to conceive of fixing these diseases.

NARRATOR - HISTORY

The chance to develop new cures began when the Human Genome Project announced they had mapped the genes that define every part of our being. It was a historic breakthrough for science.

Francis Collins (NIH)

It will give healthcare providers immense new powers to treat, prevent and cure disease.

NARRATOR

For the first time, medicine has a code book to unravel the secrets of health and disease.

Francis Collins

We have a first global sense of what it says and that places us on a firm foundation to develop much better ideas about why disease happens and how to cure it.

NARRATOR

Now it is up to genomic medicine to search for cures. The best hope for success lies here at this place of medicine and science.

Dietrich Stephan

We have some of the best science in the world here. We've already seen major advances in our work on pediatric brain tumors and schizophrenia and deafness and muscular dystrophies. That's all sprouted out of the work here. And that has really taken off since the sequencing of the human genome.

NARRATOR -- INTRO ERIN GODLA

But so much must be done before genomic medicine can make a real difference in the lives of children. And so they wait and hope. Like Erin Godla.

Erin Godla (child with juvenile ALS)

I don't like it when people think of me as a disabled person. I still go to school. I still do all those things except for like sports. And I see a lot of people staring at my legs and sometimes I don't know if they're curious about it or if they're just saying 'oh, that person's different.'

I'm diagnosed with juvenile ALS. So my foot doesn't know what to do and my muscles are going... like atrophying. I've noticed it in my hands too. Sometimes it's hard to write. I think everybody deserves a chance to know what it's like to have a normal life. And that's ... I'm hoping to have one again.

What's nice about Children's Hospital is they know how children feel and they know what they're going through. They're very, very comforting. They understand that the children need to know that everything's going to be okay. You know that they care. You can just tell in their facial expressions and everything.

Jill Joseph (Physician)

The spirit of the place is rather unique, it really is. In the ICU and in the wards and in this hospital you get to be with children, with families, and for me it provides a tremendous satisfaction.

This is a place where, whether it's the food they eat or the playrooms that are available or every single aspect of this hospital-- the training of the nurses, the training of the anesthesiologists, the construction of equipment - is all uniquely targeted to children and the needs of families.

(music)

Something very unique and special is happening at Children's -- the bringing together of expertise, of enthusiasm, of a commitment to children, of being at a point in our growth where something exciting is happening -- and we are all working collaboratively for that growth. That makes this an exceptional place and an exceptional time.

NARRATOR

But with so much opportunity, there is no more space for the critical work that must be done.

Dietrich Stephan

We're exponentially growing and the funding is exponentially growing for research. And we just don't have enough space to do it in. So I think it is very important to expand the infrastructure here, because we've shown that it's an amazing environment for this type of research. And we're now world leaders in this type of research and it would be a shame to sacrifice all that we've worked for - simply because there's not enough space.

Erin Godla

I'm looking forward to the day when I again will be able to go out there and run around with my friends. And I think this money that we raise to do the research will get us this much closer to finding cures.

NARRATOR - CLOSING

Genomic research is the key to unlocking the secrets of health and well being.

At the Children's National Medical Center, our vision is to create a home for the most important science of this century by building a national center for genomic research and medicine.

Help us fulfill the promise of genomic medicine - to discover new treatments and cures. Together we can turn illness into health, despair into hope. Help us help these children and all the generations of children to come.

Won't you claim this opportunity? And make this your legacy.

Help us build the Children's National Center for Genetic Medicine.