When is the term "game changer" not an overstatement? When it’s used to describe one of UCLA’s most inspiring donors — visionary music and film executive and philanthropist David Geffen. Through his legendary generosity, he continues to partner with UCLA to transform educational practices, preparing young people to succeed and to serve society well into the future.

AN INSPIRED AND INSPIRING INVESTMENT

With a lead investment of $100 million, David Geffen is establishing the Geffen Academy at UCLA, an innovative college-preparatory school for students from across Los Angeles, meant to help improve secondary education practices. Integrated with UCLA, the Geffen Academy at UCLA will make the vast resources of a premier public research university — people, places, and programs — accessible by its faculty and students.

University Chancellor Gene Block says, “The Geffen Academy at UCLA will enhance our ability to deliver on our core mission — research that informs teaching and service to our community.”

Geffen’s gift extends his commitment to education in general and, in particular, to UCLA, where his giving now totals more than $400 million, including $100 million to establish a scholarship fund for medical students at David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. He is the largest individual donor to UCLA.

“I’m happy to support UCLA in the creation of this unique educational opportunity for Los Angeles youth and the faculty, staff and students of the university,” Geffen said.

As a lead gift, this new investment also is meant to inspire other forward-thinking donors in Los Angeles — those who place unparalleled value on education.

To learn more about the Geffen Academy at UCLA, contact Sibyll Catalan at (310) 206-8595 or scatalan@conet.ucla.edu
Philanthropy Drives Progress

I’ve been a scientist at UCLA for more than 30 years. For 20 of those years I’ve directed the UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center (JCCC), a role from which I recently retired. As a researcher and former administrator at one of only 45 National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer centers, I know firsthand how crucial private philanthropy is in advancing discovery.

Traditional research funding supports discovery that is far along in the process. We scientists like to joke that you already have to have achieved the goals of a grant to get the grant. But at JCCC — and everywhere at UCLA — we want to be on to the next big thing. We want to support young investigators eager to make their marks and make a difference with remarkable discoveries. The job of a scientist is to look at problems with fresh perspectives and come up with ideas that make people say, “Well, that changes everything.” We can’t do that with any kind of funding other than private philanthropy.

For instance, in this issue you’ll read about a recent $10-million gift to support cancer research, which I am thrilled about. You’ll read about other wonderful gifts, too, through which people are driving progress by investing in UCLA. That’s how you and UCLA collaborate to write success stories.

— JUDITH GASSON

Progress Report

BY UNIT

Health Sciences $834,064,998 of $2 billion
Professional Schools $713,546,200 of $1.487 billion
The College $239,907,286 of $400 million
Athletics $171,116,701 of $260 million
Campuswide Initiatives $197,416,908 of $178 million

BY PURPOSE

Student/Faculty Support $424,960,230 of $1.5 billion
Programs/Research $958,700,623 of $1.65 billion
Capital $370,561,461 of $800 million
Designated Discretionary $401,829,779 of $250 million

Data as of 11/11/2015

‘Tis the Season

Happy holidays! It’s that time of year again, when giving and gratitude are on our minds. We will be grateful for your end-of-year donation to UCLA. Your tax-deductible gifts go a long way in helping us advance our mission of teaching, research, and service. In fact, they go so far you can feel their influence in your lives and your communities. Your partnership helps us all make progress. Thank you!
SOLVING FOR X

UCLA, known for its pioneering spirit and bold ideas, is joining forces with another big thinker to inspire students to imagine a better tomorrow. XPRIZE and UCLA have partnered to launch an unprecedented multi-year initiative — FuturizeX — to inspire the next generation of ideators and inventors. Taking its cues from emerging technologies, FuturizeX will create a new space on the UCLA campus for students and the greater Los Angeles community to explore new breakthroughs and ideas that are transforming the blueprint of tomorrow in medicine, robotics, education, and beyond.

In three major public programs per year, FuturizeX will showcase at UCLA some of today’s renowned thought leaders and groundbreaking emerging technologies. The initiative also will bring to UCLA the XPRIZE model of solving humanity’s most pressing issues through large-scale incentivized competitions. FuturizeX will launch an unprecedented undergraduate student competition to develop a breakthrough invention using science, engineering, art, and math. FuturizeX also will spotlight UCLA’s emerging technologies and the groundbreaking work of XPRIZE.

The inaugural event Nov. 6, 2015, featured the topic “The Future of Man in Space” at the UCLA IDEAS campus in the heart of Silicon Beach. The event began with a showcase of game-changing technologies in robotics, holograms, and 3D printers. After, Peter Diamandis, CEO of XPRIZE, talked with George Whitesides, CEO of Virgin Galactic; Firouz Naderi, director for solar system exploration at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory; and Chris Voorhees, vice president of spacecraft development at the asteroid mining company Planetary Resources.

To learn more about big thinking and FuturizeX, please contact Andres Cuervo at (310) 206-6290 or visit futurizex.ucla.edu
TO YOUR HEALTH

Seeing to the Future of Medicine

The intersection of Le Conte and Tiverton Avenues in Westwood is now also a critical juncture in medical education. Geffen Hall, named for UCLA’s largest donor, is a new kind of learning environment for tomorrow’s scientists and health care leaders.

Based on the understanding that health care is a team effort — one that brings people, disciplines, and discoveries together to achieve what they could not achieve individually — the facility enhances the already exceptional David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. The building combines the newest technology, spaces that promote collaboration, and an open environment that includes a vast courtyard.

“Geffen Hall’s glass façade reflects our vision for the future of science and medicine and the connection between our faculty and students and the people we serve,” says John Mazziotta, UCLA’s vice chancellor for health sciences. Four out of five graduates will remain in California for their residency training, which is a key indicator of where they will practice in the future and another way the health sciences at UCLA deliver excellence to our state and beyond.

A Commitment to Eradicating Cancer

Ali Jassim recognizes excellence and has a great sense for what ventures will yield the greatest returns. Whether advising on one of the biggest bank bailouts in history or developing some of the most prestigious commercial real estate in California, Jassim understands how to create exciting new ventures that redefine borders and break barriers. He exudes optimism and seizes opportunities, just like UCLA.

It’s only fitting, then, that UCLA inspired Jassim and his family to take on one of medicine’s greatest challenges by giving $10 million to establish the Ali Jassim Family Cancer Research Fund. And it’s especially apt that the gift honors Judith Gasson, who retired this fall as president of the Jonsson Cancer Center Foundation and as director of the Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center after 20 years of stellar service in that role. (See this issue’s “Speaking of the Centennial Campaign” on page 2.) The Jassims and Gasson share a vision of a world without cancer.

“I believe in giving back to society and making a difference in the world, and it gives my family and me great pleasure to contribute to UCLA’s premier cancer program,” says Jassim. “The fight against cancer begins with research, and research cannot continue without funding.”

The gift will build the Ali Jassim Family Cancer Research Suite, which will consist of two laboratories in UCLA’s Center for Health Sciences South Tower. It also will create the UCLA Ali Jassim Family Cancer Research Program to support researchers and physician-scientists dedicated to eradicating cancer and improving cancer care.

Jassim has invited his friends and colleagues to contribute to the fund, stretching its influence in advancing life-changing research at the university.

To help UCLA eradicate cancer, please contact Margaret Steele at (310) 794-5244 or mrsteele@mednet.ucla.edu

First-year medical student Marina (Molly) Sprague: “With the amazing learning possibilities of the new Geffen Hall, I will be able to practice medicine courageously, conscientiously, and compassionately.”
The first things engineers devise are ideas. From there, they put together technologies, processes, and materials to make things anew. And if they are engineers and students at UCLA Henry Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Science, they then apply their innovations to world-changing work going on in a number of other fields.

Under the leadership of outgoing Dean Vijay K. Dhir, engineering at UCLA has risen remarkably in stature. Ranked among the top 10 public engineering schools in the country, the school has seen a dramatic rise in the number of faculty members elected to the National Academy of Engineering, one of the field’s highest professional honors.

At an event held Nov. 6, 2015, to celebrate UCLA Engineering’s exciting successes and Centennial Campaign momentum, Henry Samueli ’75, MS ’76, PhD ’80 said, “I couldn’t be prouder to have my name associated with the school.”

Consider these accomplishments brought to you by UCLA Engineering: interactive apps that serve as pocket physician assistants, tracking and testing and collecting data that will help people and their doctors predict and prevent disease and manage chronic conditions. A device that enables your mobile phone to detect allergens, such as peanuts and gluten, in food. Research that is helping make concrete buildings better able to withstand earthquakes. Artificial limbs with more sensation. Devices to predict and protect the brain from injury. Evidence-based input that informs national cybersecurity and technology policies. And robot THOR-RD, designed for disaster response and able to perform complex, dangerous tasks without putting human lives at risk.

In short, UCLA engineers and engineering students are collaborating to devise better lives. And philanthropists are among our most important collaborators, propelling innovation through financial contributions. Generosity continues to engender many of our engineering successes. Our school had a record-breaking year for fundraising in the first year of the campaign, raising nearly $42.6 million.

To help UCLA engineer a better world, contact Brandon Baker at (310) 206-5303 or bbaker@support.ucla.edu
Distinguished Professor and former dean of social sciences in the UCLA College David O. Sears has established the David O. Sears Presidential Endowed Chair in the Division of Social Sciences, demonstrating his generosity and passion for his profession.

Sears’ wish is that this rotating chair — which qualified for UC President Janet Napolitano’s endowed chair matching initiative — propel the careers of as many junior faculty members as possible so that the social sciences at UCLA can continue to generate research and solutions that improve our society.

Sears, who joined the UCLA faculty in 1961, is a distinguished professor of psychology and political science. He served as dean of social sciences from 1983 to 1992 and directed the Institute for Social Science Research from 1993 to 2008. He is world renowned for his research on political psychology, especially on race in politics. He not only has devoted his life to UCLA and its students, but also with this gift, he underscores the philanthropic spirit of our faculty.

Seven hundred thirty nine faculty and emeriti have made 1,736 gifts to the College since the start of the Centennial Campaign, totaling $79,270,120.

**Professing Support for Public Higher Education**

I believe in public education for all, and I believe that it can and should be at the highest level of quality. High-quality higher education should not be limited to private universities supported by the wealthy nor benefit only young people from the most affluent families. Public education, I believe, is something that has made America great.

Nowhere is that more true than in California. I came to California from New England, where public higher education has never taken hold as much as in the Far West or the Midwest. The great private institutions of the Northeast have historically catered particularly to the wealthy and well-born. I found when I arrived here that that was not so true in California. The University of California offered the finest education to all students regardless of their backgrounds. That was liberating for me.

So now it is time for me to express my gratitude through philanthropy. I am fortunate to be in a position to be able to help in that way. My gift reflects my knowledge that competing with private universities for the best younger faculty is particularly difficult for UCLA, given the newness of our endowment and the decline in state support. I hope that those among my colleagues who are in a position to give will do so, too.

— DAVID O. SEARS

To go public by supporting UCLA College, contact Megan Kissinger at (310) 206-0667 or mkissinger@support.ucla.edu

Photo by Ann Johansson