

Press Release

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH RECEIVES \$47.5 MILLION GIFT FROM CRAIG H. NEILSEN FOUNDATION FOR NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART REHABILITATION HOSPITAL

Neilsen Foundation gift is instrumental to the university's master plan for the transformational redevelopment of the health sciences campus

October 22, 2017 – The University of Utah today announced that the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation will donate \$47.5 million for a new, state-of-the-art rehabilitation hospital as part of the redevelopment and modernization of the university's health sciences campus. The 75-bed hospital, to be named the Craig H. Neilsen Rehabilitation Hospital, will be one of the most advanced rehabilitation facilities in the nation and will serve as a catalyst for the further development of the university's rehabilitation programs.

“This remarkable donation will allow the university to dramatically expand and advance our rehabilitation capabilities,” said David Pershing, president of the University of Utah. “We are proud to partner with the Neilsen Foundation to create an innovative design for an accessible, patient-centered rehabilitation hospital, inspired by the visionary spirit of Craig Neilsen's exemplary life.”

“For nearly 50 years, University of Utah Health's Rehabilitation Center has been a recognized leader in rehabilitation medicine and education,” said A. Lorris Betz, interim senior vice president for University of Utah Health Sciences and CEO of University of Utah Health. “Thanks to the Neilsen Foundation's gift, we now commence the construction of a free-standing hospital, integrated with the redevelopment of the health sciences campus. This will ensure that we continue to provide leading-edge rehabilitative care for generations to come.”

The building's interior and exterior spaces will reflect an accessible and dignified environment for all patients and their families to promote emotional well-being in addition to physical rehabilitation. Craig Neilsen had a great love of architecture and design and understood how one's environment positively influences the

healing process. Carefully chosen exterior and interior building materials and landscaping will incorporate the natural magnificence of the Utah environment into the hospital, providing an inspiring atmosphere for patients and their families as they receive the highest quality rehabilitative care.

Craig Neilsen was no stranger to the rehabilitation hospital experience. In 1985, a car accident left him paralyzed from the neck down with only minimal use of one hand. Prior to the accident, Craig was the owner of a thriving construction and real estate development business in southern Idaho and had recently acquired control of two small casinos on the Nevada-Idaho border. Following his injury, he became laser-focused on his businesses, including the founding and expansion of Ameristar Casinos, which he took public in 1993. In 2002, Craig established the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation, which through his personal generosity has become the largest private supporter of spinal cord injury causes in North America.

“Although the auto accident severely impacted my father’s life, it was not the end, as many people might think; it was a new beginning,” said Ray Neilsen, Craig’s son and Co-Trustee and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation. “My dad had incredible tenacity. He was a force of vision and passion who wanted nothing more than to help people like him. This hospital perfectly emulates his legacy.”

Craig had several relationships with the University of Utah throughout his lifetime that continue to be honored through the philanthropy of the Neilsen Foundation. Not only did he spend time as a rehabilitation patient at the university, he spent many years as a student here as well, earning an MBA in 1964 and a law degree in 1967. The university also received several grants from the Neilsen Foundation during Craig’s lifetime supporting the Rehabilitation Center and providing scholarships for students with spinal cord injuries. After his passing in 2006, Craig was honored with the Distinguished Alumni Award from the university, the highest honor conferred on a graduate.

“The Neilsen Foundation’s gift enables us to reimagine rehabilitative care by embracing the diverse ideas and skills of the entire University of Utah community,” said Dr. Jeffrey Rosenbluth, the Craig H. Neilsen Presidential Endowed Chair for Spinal Cord Injury Medicine, which was created in 2013. “Faculty, students and staff with diverse backgrounds in rehabilitation, engineering, computer science, exercise, therapy and design will work side by side with our patients in this collaborative space. These teams will push the boundaries of recovery and quality of life after even the most severe injuries and

disease processes. Technology has absolutely revolutionized this field and will continue to do so. We designed this building to accelerate that innovation.”

The target completion date of the Craig H. Neilsen Rehabilitation Hospital is spring 2020. The groundbreaking will take place on Wednesday, November 1, 2017. Please see below for a full schedule of the groundbreaking.

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University of Utah

University of Utah Health is the only university health system in the state of Utah, and provides patient care for the people of Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana and much of Nevada. It is the training ground for most of Utah’s physicians, nurses, pharmacists, therapists and other health care professionals. With an annual budget of \$3.3 billion (FY16), U of U Health is a highly complex academic health system comprised of the Hospitals and Clinics; Huntsman Cancer Institute; the Schools of Medicine and Dentistry, the Colleges of Health, Nursing, and Pharmacy. Staffed by more than 18,000 employees, for eight years running, U of U Health has ranked among the top 10 U.S. academic medical centers in the rigorous Vizient Quality and Accountability Study.

Craig H. Neilsen Foundation

The Craig H. Neilsen Foundation is a private foundation dedicated to supporting both programs and scientific research to improve the quality of life for those affected by and living with spinal cord injury. Craig H. Neilsen established the Foundation in 2002, and through the endowment he dedicated to it, the Foundation has grown into a major partner in the spinal cord injury field as the largest private funder of spinal cord injury research, rehabilitation, clinical training and programmatic support in the United States and Canada. The Foundation’s vision, like that of its founder, is that individuals with spinal cord injuries, and those who care for them, live full and productive lives as active participants in their communities.

Groundbreaking Schedule and Details

12:00–12:05 p.m.	Welcome	David W. Pershing, PhD <i>President, University of Utah</i>
12:05–12:10 p.m.	Campus Transformation Overview	Lorris Betz, MD, PhD <i>Interim Senior Vice President for Health Sciences, University of Utah</i>
12:10–12:15 p.m.	Vision for Hospital	Ray Neilsen <i>Co-Trustee and Chairman of the Board of Directors, Craig H. Neilsen Foundation</i>
12:15–12:20 p.m.	Rehab Goals + Overview of New Hospital	Richard Kendall, DO <i>Chief, Division of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation</i>
12:20–12:25 p.m.	Patient Perspective	University of Utah Health Rehabilitation Patient
12:25–12:40 p.m.	Official Groundbreaking	Above + other dignitaries TBD



Architectural rendering of the new **Craig H. Neilsen Rehabilitation Hospital** at the University of Utah. Once completed, the facility will be one of the most advanced rehabilitation centers in the nation and will serve as a catalyst for the further development of the university's health science campus.