

# News Release

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **The George Washington University Dedicates the Dr. Cyrus and Myrtle Katzen Cancer Research Center**



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*Cyrus and Myrtle Katzen Give a Record \$10 Million Gift to Advance Cancer Initiatives*

*at The George Washington University Medical Center*

**Washington-** In what represents the largest individual gift ever to The George Washington University and its Medical Center, Cyrus and Myrtle Katzen have committed \$10 million to advance a wide range of cancer initiatives.

“ I am deeply grateful for this historic leadership gift from a native Washingtonian family that has been personally affected by this devastating disease,” said GW President Steven Knapp. “ The Katzens’ generosity will greatly accelerate our ability to conduct the kind of research that can truly make a difference to cancer prevention and treatment.”

The gift will establish The Dr. Cyrus and Myrtle Katzen Cancer Research Center, enhancing recruitment of top scholars in the field and development of innovative approaches to battling and treating cancer. It is the latest expression of close and long-standing ties between the Katzens and GW. Six members of the Katzen family have attended GW, including four who earned medical degrees. In addition, the Katzens have given more than \$1.3 million to the university over the years, primarily in support of the Medical Center and the GW Cancer Institute. Dr. Katzen has often spoken of the high quality of care his first wife, Sylvia, received at GW Hospital during her 10-year battle with cancer. She died in 1980.

The \$10 million gift from the Katzens is the second of its size since President Knapp took office last year. An eight-figure donation in February from the Robert H. Smith and Charles E. Smith Family Foundations and Robert P. and Arlene R. Kogod came in the form of a \$10 million matching challenge to renovate the Charles E. Smith Center. Both gifts represent the largest ever in university history.

“ Charles E. Smith was a close friend and business associate and I’ ve had the pleasure of working with his son Robert Smith, and son-in-law, Robert Kogod, over the past couple of decades,” said Dr. Katzen. “ Myrtle and I were inspired by their generosity and, like them, we wanted to give back to an institution that is so central to the vitality of our nation’ s capital.”

“ The Katzen family has been a big part of the Medical Center community and has touched thousands of lives through their partnership with the university,” said GW Provost and Vice President for Health Affairs John F. Williams, MD, EdD. “ Their extraordinary commitment will enable our team to better serve our patients and make discoveries that will one day put an end to cancer.”

Because the Katzen Center is being established in a city known for its high cancer rates, the family’ s philanthropy will have local resonance as it supports the Medical Center’ s priorities: continuing to improve quality of care, expanding the body of knowledge in support of a cure, and advancing the development of focused research and treatment programs.

“ The Katzens are dedicated to furthering GW’ s cancer initiatives in a region that can most benefit from our work,” said School of Medicine and Health Sciences Dean James Scott, MD. “ This gift demonstrates their commitment to compassionate cancer care and advanced research initiatives.”

Robert Siegel, MD, professor of medicine and director of the Division of Hematology/Oncology, will chair the board of directors to be established on behalf of The Dr. Cyrus and Myrtle Katzen Cancer Research Center.

“ I am deeply appreciative of Dr. Katzen's generous donation to GW's cancer program,” said Dr. Siegel. “ We will utilize his gift to expand clinical and basic science cancer research, as well as improve care for our patients.”

Cyrus Katzen is the owner and president of Mozel Development Corporation and Culmore Realty Company. Tysons Corner and Crystal City are among the many properties he has helped develop. He also has had successful careers in banking and dentistry. He holds a degree in dentistry from Georgetown University and is known for inventing an automatic processing system for medical and dental X-ray film.

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*Credit: GW Medical Center Communications and Marketing*