



Editor: Rachel Baugh

Photo Credit: Erin Smith

Special Edition

\$5 million Gift from Springer-Lu Family Foundation to Support Lu-Springer Research Scholars

We are thrilled to partner with the Springer-Lu Family Foundation, who has generously gifted \$5 million to establish an endowment to support Aspirnaut™ at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Our goal is to match their effort and ensure Aspirnaut's future.

"We're deeply grateful to Dr. Chafen Lu and the Springer-Lu Family Foundation for the visionary support of the Lu-Springer High School Research Scholars," said Aspirnaut™ scientific director and co-founder Billy Hudson, MD. "Gifts to Aspirnaut™ help change lives. Philanthropy here is also about developing solutions to the largest problems our society faces. From causes to disease to improved health care delivery to technological innovation, these issues demand a talented STEM workforce."

Aspirnaut™, a K-20 STEM pipeline, has changed the trajectory of students' lives while developing the STEM workforce of tomorrow. Each summer, talented high school and undergraduate students selected as Aspirnaut™ research scholars attend an immersive experience as a member of a research team at VUMC.

The gift from the Springer-Lu Family Foundation builds on their previous support and will endow the program's Lu-Springer High School Research Scholars. New commitments will ensure high school and undergraduate scholars benefit from endowed funding.

Chafen Lu, a Harvard scientist and biotech industry expert, has deep interest in cultivating STEM opportunities for rural youth. The timing of the gift corresponds with increasing calls to improve K-12 STEM education and grow STEM talent to bolster the United States' science workforce and leadership.

"I have great confidence in the Aspirnaut™ program, which has a proven record of providing students — especially those from rural areas — with opportunities to thrive and become future STEM leaders," said Lu. "My family and I look forward to joining others who believe that investing in young minds today will shape STEM innovation and leadership of tomorrow."

"We are very hopeful that others will respond to this call for support," said Julie Hudson, MD, MA, Aspirnaut™ executive director and co-founder. "With additional community investment at this opportune time, Aspirnaut™ is well positioned to address the critical need for STEM leaders throughout our country."

Now more than ever, philanthropic gifts of all sizes are critical to opening doors to STEM education opportunities.

To make a gift, visit vanderbilthealth.org/aspirnaut.

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