

Springer-Lu Family Foundation awards \$5 million for K-20 STEM program

April 5, 2025

Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) has announced a \$5 million gift from the Massachusetts-based Springer-Lu Family Foundation to establish an endowment in support of its Aspirnaut program.

Founded by Vanderbilt faculty members Billy and Julie Hudson in 2006, Aspirnaut is a K-20 STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) pipeline that offers summer research opportunities, professional skills development, and wellness training to students from mostly rural areas. 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, which builds on previous support from the foundation, will endow the program's high school research scholars.



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“Under the guidance of Drs. Billy and Julie Hudson, Aspirnaut continues to open doors and transform lives through the unique educational opportunities afforded the scholars,” said Jeff Balsler, president and CEO of VUMC and dean of the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. “The Springer-Lu Family Foundation’s generous gift will help ensure the future of this special program.”

(Photo credit: Getty Images/izusek)

"\$5 million gift from Springer-Lu Family Foundation to support VUMC's Aspirnaut program." Vanderbilt University Medical Center press release 03/31/2025.

Subjects [Education](#); [Higher education](#); [Science / Technology](#); [Rural](#); [Health](#)

People: [Julie Hudson](#); [Billy Hudson](#); [Jeff Balser](#)

Organizations: [Springer-Lu Family Foundation](#); [Vanderbilt University Medical Center](#); [Vanderbilt University School of Medicine](#)

Locations [Nashville](#); [Tennessee](#)