

Desai Sethi Family Foundation Commits \$20 Million to Fund Creation of Urology Institute at Miller School

In an effort to further position the University of Miami Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine as a global leader in the field of urology, the Desai Sethi Family Foundation has made an extraordinary commitment of \$20 million to the Miller School's renowned Department of Urology. The Foundation's generosity will help establish a premier Urology Institute within the Miller School that will accelerate breakthrough advances in research, expand clinical care, and train future generations of urologists.



Dipen J. Parekh, M.D.

The Desai Sethi Urology Institute, as it will be known, will attract the brightest minds and recruit the most talented

physician-scientists dedicated to the study and treatment of urologic disorders, and fund innovative research in the field.

University of Miami President Julio Frenk, M.D., M.P.H., Ph.D., said, “The Desai Sethi Family Foundation’s generosity propels the University into the upper echelon of institutes dedicated to the discovery and treatment of urologic disease – not just in South Florida, but worldwide. We are grateful for this commitment to the types of advances in health care that are only possible at an academic health system.”

The Desai Sethi Family Foundation commitment is part of the University of Miami’s recently announced *Ever Brighter: The Campaign for our Next Century*. The most ambitious in the University’s history, the campaign has already raised more than \$1.6 billion toward its \$2.5 billion goal.

Notable Advances

The Miller School’s Department of Urology has conducted research that has notably advanced the science of urology, publishing seminal work on the efficacy of robotic surgery, urologic cancers, men’s health, endourology and male infertility, and in treating various urologic diseases.

The Institute’s founding director will be Dipen J. Parekh, M.D., the chief operating officer at the University of Miami Health System, professor and chair of the Department of Urology at the Miller School, the Victor A. Politano, M.D. Endowed Chair in Urology, and one of the world’s most experienced robotic surgeons in urologic oncology. In that role, he works closely with the NCI-designated Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center at the Miller School.

“We are dedicated to exploring the latest discoveries in the laboratory and accelerating the most promising therapies from the lab into our clinics for the best possible treatment for patients,” said Dr. Parekh, who is also director of robotic surgery. “This generous gift will transform our ability to expand the scope and influence of our work, creating a thriving environment for new discoveries in the field that will benefit patients worldwide.”

The Institute will be located in South Florida, granting access to a multitude of patients from various backgrounds and cultures, and will be an international destination for care. Institute researchers will be able to study health disparities in the treatment of both men and women with urological issues.

Important Milestone

“The creation of the Desai Sethi Urology Institute will be a new crown jewel for our health system,” said Stuart Miller, chairman of the UHealth Board of Directors, chair of *Ever Brighter: The Campaign for Our Next Century*, and a University of Miami trustee. “This is an important milestone in the University’s Ever Brighter fundraising campaign. This commitment demonstrates that UHealth and the Miller School of Medicine are at the forefront of patient care, research and innovation and the leading health care system in our community.”

Dean and Chief Academic Officer of the Miller School, Henri R. Ford, M.D., M.H.A., described the creation of the Institute as “transformative.” He added, “This is a defining moment that will distinctly elevate the level of groundbreaking research in urologic diseases, ultimately benefiting patients and

impacting how we share that knowledge with the next generation of physician-researchers.”

Leaders in the field of urology across the country affirm that countless lives can be saved around the world through the Desai Sethi Urology Institute’s research, scientific investigation, and innovation under Dr. Parekh’s expertise and guidance.

“With his singular vision for excellence, superb administrative and organizational skills, and a fierce determination to contribute to global health, Dr. Parekh has built a stellar career spanning academic medicine, clinical practice, and institutional leadership,” said Joel Sheinfeld, M.D., Florence and Theodore Baumritter/Enid Ancell Chair of Urologic Cancer, deputy chief of urology services, and director of the urology fellowship program at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. “In leading the Desai Sethi Urology Institute, Dr. Parekh has a unique and well-deserved opportunity to assemble the necessary resources to further enhance innovation and multidisciplinary collaboration, and to create unique synergies. This will allow the Institute to fulfill its highest mission of advancing the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of urologic diseases.”

Visionary Leadership

“Dr. Dipen Parekh’s individual abilities and accomplishments as a surgeon and scientist have been amazing and obvious. What he has also demonstrated, though, is visionary leadership,” said Joseph A. Smith Jr., M.D., professor at the Department of Urologic Surgery at Vanderbilt University. “This incredible gift will permit development of an institute which will launch

the University of Miami into a position as one of the premier institutions worldwide in research and clinical care for patients with disorders within the discipline of urology and permit the introduction of new and exciting treatments.”

There are only a select few freestanding urology institutes within the United States which makes the commitment from the Desai Sethi Family Foundation all the more impactful.

“Dr. Dipen Parekh is one of the most innovative and forward-thinking urologic oncologists in our nation. His work has had a tremendous impact on how cancers of the kidney, prostate, and bladder are treated around the world. I can’t think of a better steward of this remarkably generous gift to further the science of urology. I am confident that in the years to come, lives will be saved through the scientific investigations supported by the Institute,” said Ian Thompson Jr., M.D., professor emeritus at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

The new urology institute will be named and known as the Desai Sethi Urology Institute. The University of Miami will further honor the donor’s generosity by naming the Professional Arts Center, located at 1150 N.W. 14th Street, the Desai Sethi Medical Center.

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