To: UVM Community

From: Tom Sullivan

RE: The Robert Larner M.D. College of Medicine

Earlier this afternoon at a special event held at the College of Medicine, I had the distinct pleasure of announcing an estate commitment of $66 million to the University of Vermont from UVM dual-degree alumnus and Vermont native Robert Larner ’39, M.D.’42, and his wife, Helen. To recognize and express gratitude for their extraordinary commitment to medical education at UVM, the University of Vermont Board of Trustees voted to re-name the College of Medicine in honor of Dr. Larner. The medical school will now be known as The Robert Larner M.D. College of Medicine at The University of Vermont. This gift, when realized, will be the largest philanthropic commitment ever to a public university in New England.

Robert and Helen Larner have for decades been strong supporters of financial accessibility and affordability for high-quality medical education. The relationship dates back more than 30 years, and started with the Larner Loan Fund. Established in the 1980s as a self-perpetuating mechanism to provide loans and scholarships, the Larner Loan Fund has helped almost 1,300 talented UVM medical students pay for their medical education. The Fund has grown to nearly $10 million. I personally know how much this fund means to Dr. Larner because I have seen the walls of his home office covered with pictures and thank-you notes from these very grateful students.

In 2012, Dr. Larner’s keen interest in technology led him to start funding equipment for the Clinical Simulation Laboratory and later the creation of a cutting-edge team-based active learning classroom. In a special investiture ceremony last fall, I had the honor of introducing Kathryn Huggett, Ph.D., as the inaugural Robert Larner M.D. ’42 Endowed Professor in Medical Education, the first of its kind in the country.

In just the last 11 months, the Larners have made two other very significant gifts to advance medical education, toward the realization of their vision that UVM offers a “second to none” educational program for our medical students. Their first gift, valued at almost $9 million last October, was followed by a second gift for an additional $19.7 million in April. At the time, this $19.7 million gift was the largest single gift in UVM history. With this newest commitment, the total lifetime giving and estate commitments from Robert and Helen Larner totals $100 million.

Below is a link to video footage of the ceremony, which contains additional information, including a video about Dr. Robert Larner. This was a truly remarkable day for the University of Vermont—one that we can all share with pride and excitement.

On behalf of a grateful University and College of Medicine, we are deeply appreciative for the Larners’ confidence that the University of Vermont will provide a medical education that is indeed second to none.

http://www.uvm.edu/medicine/larnernaming