

MSK Brain Tumor Center Launches the Mortimer B. Zuckerman Initiative Dedicated to Advancing Glioblastoma Research

Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) has received a gift of \$5 million from the Zuckerman Family Foundation to launch the Mortimer B. Zuckerman Initiative at the institution's [Brain Tumor Center](#) (BTC). This significant commitment will allow the BTC, under the leadership of director [Luis F. Parada](#), to expand its innovative research into glioblastoma, an aggressive cancer of the central nervous system.

Founded in 2007, the BTC is a collaborative research center created to promote the understanding of brain tumor biology and provide unique resources in the development of new therapies. Because brain tumor cells change when placed in tissue culture, Dr. Parada established the patient-derived xenograft (PDX) program—in which malignant human brain tumor cells are transferred to genetically engineered mice—to study how these cancers evolve and test targeted therapies.

The Mortimer B. Zuckerman Initiative at the MSK Brain Tumor Center will focus on understanding the development and progression of glioblastoma, a fast-growing cancer that forms in the brain. The Initiative will expand and maintain PDX models of glioblastoma, provide genomic sequencing and analysis of samples, and fund the pre-clinical evaluation of new drugs as well as those previously approved by the FDA for other conditions. Data from this research will provide long-term resources to MSK investigators for the testing of new hypotheses and for preclinical evaluations of new therapies.

“This gift will allow us to bolster our understanding of glioblastoma’s essential biological features and capitalize on that knowledge to create more effective treatments,” says Dr. Parada. “We are extremely grateful to the Zuckerman Family for this support.”

A renowned publisher and real estate developer, Mortimer B. Zuckerman was first elected to MSK’s Board of Overseers in 1991, and he and his family have been generous supporters of MSK for many years. In 2006, Mr. Zuckerman’s charitable trust made a transformational gift to create MSK’s Mortimer B. Zuckerman Research Center. Located on East 68th Street in Manhattan, this 23-story, 693,000 square-foot building allowed MSK to nearly double its research capacity. The Zuckerman Research Center, also known as the ZRC, houses programs in [Cancer Biology and Genetics](#), [Computational Biology](#), [Immunology](#), and [Human Oncology and Pathogenesis](#), as well as some of the laboratories for [Molecular Pharmacology Program](#). In addition, it is the home of many [Memorial Hospital research laboratories](#) and the [Gerstner Sloan Kettering Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences](#). Today’s contribution is a further example of the Zuckerman family’s deep commitment to MSK’s mission.

“We are pleased to be able to continue our commitment to MSK and provide these resources to expand Dr. Parada’s important work,” says James Gertler, Board member

of the Zuckerman Family Foundation, “We know that this research has the potential to impact lives around the world.”