A Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA) is a brain attack, often called a “mini-stroke” in which the neurological symptoms last minutes to hours, and resolve within 24 hours. It is often a warning of a more serious stroke to come. Recent evidence suggests that the risk of stroke after a TIA is 10 to 20 per cent within 90 days, and the risk is highest in the first 48 hours after the attack. To address this urgency, Sunnybrook is to be home to one of the world’s first dedicated rapid-response, high risk TIA Units.

Thanks to an investment from the Holbrook Family, Sunnybrook has opened the Dr. Thomas & Harriet Black TIA Unit, named in honour of the parents of world-renowned stroke expert, researcher and Sunnybrook clinician, Dr. Sandra Black. The four-room, outpatient clinic will be staffed by Sunnybrook stroke experts and will offer the most rapid and accurate diagnosis of TIA patients using state-of-the-art technology.

“This is a momentous development for the stroke program and for Sunnybrook,” says Dr. David Gladstone, Director of the unit and stroke neurologist at Sunnybrook. “Prevention is much better than a cure when it comes to stroke. One in every two strokes is potentially preventable, and so we must do everything possible to identify and rapidly treat those individuals who are at highest risk. The Holbrook Family’s gift to Sunnybrook will establish a new standard of care for the management of high risk individuals with stroke warning symptoms.”

Richard Holbrook and his family have been generous donors to Sunnybrook for many years, principally supporting initiatives in the Schulich Heart Program at Sunnybrook. “I’ve had the opportunity to bond closely with several of the professionals at Sunnybrook,” said Mr. Holbrook. “I have personally benefitted from their care, so I know how talented the people here are. This new TIA Unit will allow specialists to see a lot more people, a lot earlier, which is key to avoiding a serious stroke. I hope our family’s investment makes a difference to many people and that it encourages others to give.”

The innovative TIA Unit will reduce waiting times for patients by fast-tracking important diagnostic tests and treatments, and will help to reduce hospital admissions and overcrowding in the emergency department. Working with Sunnybrook experts in Medical Imaging, Medicine, Surgery, Nursing, and the EEG and Sleep Lab, the TIA Unit will foster interdisciplinary collaboration at Sunnybrook and ensure the best patient care possible.

“The need for these services is critical,” says Dr. Sandra Black. “Someone in Canada suffers a stroke every ten minutes, and every 32 minutes a loved one dies from one. The annual death toll of 16,000 makes stroke the third leading killer, after cancer and heart disease. As a Regional Stroke Centre, we have the responsibility to set a high standard and this unit will help us lead the way.”

The Holbrook Family decided to honour the contributions made to health care by the Black family through naming the clinic. The late Dr. Thomas Black was a respected physician and a U of T medical graduate who served in the Canadian air force during WWII. Harriet Black, a U of T grad in Nursing, helped to start the Victoria Order of Nurses and the Canadian Mental Health Association in her community of Sault Ste. Marie. Harriet was awarded the Order of Canada for her dedication and achievements.

Sunnybrook’s own Dr. Sandra Black was the Division Head of Neurology at Sunnybrook for over 11 years and is currently the Medical Director of the Regional Stroke Centre. Under her direction, Sunnybrook has become a leading centre for stroke care and research. Dr. Gladstone, who has been mentored by Dr. Black for 13 years, received a Clinician-Scientist Award from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario for his work on developing the TIA Unit.

A gift from the late Vimy Coleman in support of Population Health and Neurosciences at Sunnybrook

$235,000 from Hold ‘em For Life in support of establishing a multi-modality image guided brachytherapy facility

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For Dr. Sherry Cooper, “it is always about people”

If you speak with Dr. Sherry Cooper about her experience with Sunnybrook, you will hear nothing but praise for the exceptional people who make Sunnybrook an extraordinary institution. It is the dedication and commitment of the nurses, physicians, and all the staff of the Foundation that inspires volunteers and motivates Dr. Cooper to give so generously of her time and money to the Sunnybrook Foundation.

Dr. Cooper, Executive Vice President, Global Economic Strategist, for BMO Financial Group, has been a valued member of Sunnybrook Foundation’s Board of Directors since 2002, providing her considerable expertise as an economist, financial analyst and business executive.

Dr. Cooper recounts that from the start of her involvement with Sunnybrook, she was immensely impressed with the quality of the medical staff, leading-edge research scientists and dedicated volunteers.

“Sunnybrook is a remarkable institution, with care providers that are improving the health of all Canadians. This, in tandem with the strong fundraising team in place at Sunnybrook Foundation, makes my job as a volunteer that much easier.”

Over the course of the past five years, Dr. Cooper’s commitment to the Sunnybrook Foundation has grown. Following two years as Chair of the Audit Committee and a member of the Executive Committee of the board, Dr. Cooper was appointed to an even larger role at the Annual General Meeting of the Foundation held on September 24th at the Vaughan Estate. Dr. Cooper will take on the responsibilities of Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors, Treasurer, and Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee of the Foundation.

“I am grateful to be a part of Sunnybrook’s success; I enjoy my involvement with the Board. I’ve had the opportunity to work with very accomplished people and Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee of the Foundation.

“Sunnybrook Golf Classic is a celebration of Sunnybrook, a unique event that brings together the entire Sunnybrook community, its staff, donors, sponsors and volunteers.

A tremendous success, this year’s tournament raised more than $230,000 for the Schulich Heart Centre, a 64 percent increase from 2006. In addition, the tournament saw an increase in staff participation. Fifty staff members and medical professionals, spanning Sunnybrook’s departments, from Dentistry to Facilities Operations, were partnered with donors and suppliers on the course.

For the third year running, the 2007 Sunnybrook Golf Classic was fortunate to have the financial support of Roche Canada as presenting sponsor. Ronnie Miller, President & CEO of Roche Canada, kindly served as honorary chair to the Golf Classic cabinet.

Mr. Miller contributed to the event’s success to the hard work and strength of the Classic’s volunteer and sponsorship team. The Sunnybrook Golf Classic’s achievement is a glowing example of how Sunnybrook’s partnerships with volunteers, staff, donors and sponsors are the key to our success, both on and off the golf course.

The Board of Directors is crucial to Sunnybrook Foundation’s success; their leadership and strategic direction drive the $300 million Capital Campaign. The Foundation has an exceptional reputation of accountability to the donor community made possible by the strength and commitment of its volunteer Board—leaders who are charged with the responsibility of governance and oversight of our Foundation practices.

Dr. Cooper recognizes the need for talented people to step forward and share not just their financial resources, but their time and energy as well. “The success of the Campaign depends critically on the professional expertise of the volunteer Board and Governing Council.”

Asked to share her personal vision for the remaining years of the Campaign, Dr. Cooper responds, “It is the Campaign’s success that will propel us to meet the growing challenges of the highest quality of health care. It is a real pleasure to communicate to the public the amazing things that happen at Sunnybrook each and every day—world-class research, medical firsts and lives saved. And, as she looks beyond this campaign, Dr. Cooper feels that the Board widen our reach and cultivate the next generation of donors to keep Sunnybrook on the cutting edge of medical care and research for decades to come.

Dr. Cooper adds she feels fortunate to be involved with the Campaign today; the opportunity to see it take shape, after many years of careful and often tedious planning is gratifying. “Seeing the construction begin is a fantastic morale lift for everyone: the hospital, the community and the Foundation.”

Special Events: Sunnybrook Golf Classic

The 12th Annual Sunnybrook Golf Classic took place on August 22 at Angus Glen Golf Club presented by Roche Canada, in support of the Schulich Heart Centre.

The Sunnybrook Golf Classic is a celebration of Sunnybrook, a unique event that brings together the entire Sunnybrook community, its staff, donors, sponsors and volunteers.

The Sunnybrook Golf Classic’s achievement is a glowing example of how Sunnybrook’s partnerships with volunteers, staff, donors and sponsors are the key to our success, both on and off the golf course.

For more information about these and other Foundation events, please visit www.sunnybrookfoundation/events.com.