



If approved, USF's Morsani College of Medicine and the USF Heart Institute would be part of a proposed redevelopment for downtown Tampa. Graphic: USF Health.

### ***Dear Members of the USF Community:***

The greatest strength of the University of South Florida System is our ability to shape the future through education, research and innovation. In recent weeks, the university has been presented with an unprecedented opportunity to set a transformative course for both USF Health and Tampa's downtown and in doing so create an innovative and economically powerful urban core that will serve the entire Tampa Bay Region.

With today's action by the USF Board of Trustees, the university has begun the process of seeking permission to colocate the USF Morsani College of Medicine and the new USF Heart Institute in downtown Tampa on land that has been offered by Tampa Bay Lightning owner Mr. Jeff Vinik. This generous donation would place USF in the center of a transformed downtown waterfront that will be unique in the United States: a vibrant center of learning, innovation, residences, businesses and entertainment built along a picturesque waterfront that plays an important role in global trade for Florida.

This is an exciting prospect that has taken its first step and we now will request approval from the Florida Board of Governors as well as support from Florida's legislature and governor.

We envision building a facility of at least 331,000-square-feet just north of Amalie Arena and the Tampa Bay History Center. Undoubtedly, this will be one of largest single undertakings for the USF System in recent decades, but we firmly believe it is an important step forward as we seek to meet our strategic goals; raise our profile as a national and global research university; and create economic opportunity for the next generation in the Tampa Bay Region.

The downtown location would place the Morsani College of Medicine and the USF Heart Institute closer to our major teaching affiliate hospital, Tampa General Hospital, and just a short walk from the Center for Advanced Medical Learning and Simulation. The USF Heart Institute would be close to TGH, which has one of the busiest cardiac transplant, surgery and treatment programs in the nation. This close proximity will enhance USF's ability to recruit world-class faculty and top students while bringing considerable benefits to the quality of healthcare in our community. Our university's research enterprise will create a

cascade of bioscience, biotechnology and healthcare investments that would produce new high-paying jobs for the Region.

USF is not alone among American universities in recognizing the tremendous advantages of a downtown presence. Arizona State University's downtown Phoenix campus; The State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus; University City in Philadelphia; and Cortex in St. Louis are just a few examples of how institutions of higher learning and research are leveraged to create powerful, sustainable economic engines in urban cores. The location of USF Health teaching and research entities downtown will allow the Tampa Bay Region to be competitive in retaining our talented graduates in all fields with a more diversified economic base and an enterprising, creative and innovative culture.

### ***Powering Tampa's Economic Engine***

What makes the opportunity particularly exciting is also that moving portions of USF Health downtown frees up valuable space on the Tampa campus for the expansion of essential USF Health educational and research activities, thus greatly enhancing commercial investment and employment in and around campus. There will be no loss of service on the Tampa campus nor in North Tampa for those who depend on the excellent care provided by USF Health professionals. USF will continue to build on its strong partnerships with the James A. Haley VA Hospital, Moffitt Cancer Center and Florida Hospital. The Carol and Frank Morsani Center for Advanced Healthcare will continue to grow and serve tens of thousands of patients with the highest quality, one-stop, holistic care each year. USF medical students will still provide care for patients through the free BRIDGE Healthcare Clinic in the University Area Community, which has been an invaluable setting in training future medical professionals in culturally-competent healthcare for the underserved.

With new space potentially available on the Tampa campus, we are exploring several exciting growth initiatives that will elevate the impact of USF's talented students and researchers on our regional quality of life. Among them:

- A dramatic expansion of neuroscience research including recruitment of up to 30 psychiatry and neuroscience researchers who could generate an additional \$20 million in National Institutes of Health funding spinal cord injury repair as well as Alzheimer, Parkinson disease, Multiple Sclerosis, ataxia, ALS, and other neurodegenerative disease research.
- A substantial expansion of our College of Nursing on the main campus allowing us to recruit an additional 500 undergraduates and additional doctoral students. With Florida facing a shortfall of an estimated 50,000 nurses in coming years, this initiative is not only important to the future of healthcare in our state but also will allow us to expand our nursing research programs.
- Joint research programs with Moffitt Cancer Center which will include recruitment of at least 10 oncological science researchers by USF generating an additional National Cancer Institute and NIH funding.

- A joint drug discovery unit with faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences' Department of Chemistry, the College of Medicine and the College of Pharmacy – an effort which would create a fertile environment for start-up companies and a powerful attractor to pharmaceutical companies looking to relocate to Florida.
- A new joint Department of Bioengineering between the Colleges of Engineering and Medicine with a focus on expanding federal research funding in nanotechnology, tissue engineering, sensor technology and brain-machine interface technologies, which will ultimately can yield spin-off companies.
- A new focus on microbiology, including emerging pathogens and biodefense which will leverage our outstanding clinical infectious disease program as well as the superb research being done on tropical diseases in the College of Public Health in collaboration with Draper Labs.

In short, the space gained on the Tampa campus allows us to pursue growth in areas that are both critical to the continued advancement of healthcare for our community and beyond as well as being strategically important to USF's continued rise as a global research university.

### ***A University at its Best***

The most important role the USF System can play is to empower and elevate our students, faculty, staff and community to reach their highest aspirations and potential – the downtown project and the planned expansion of health education and research on the Tampa campus does just that.

I am confident that under the leadership of Dr. Charles J. Lockwood, Senior Vice President for USF Health and Dean of the Morsani College of Medicine, that USF Health's innovative role in health education, research and entrepreneurship will reach new heights. We have found in Mr. Vinik a committed partner and philanthropist who cares deeply about this community and shares our institutional mission, vision and values. And the recent addition of former Hillsborough County Commission Chairman Mark Sharpe to lead the Tampa Innovation Alliance – the advocacy partnership created by USF, Busch Gardens, Moffitt Cancer Center and Florida Hospital to revitalize the commercial corridors in our area – creates powerful forward momentum.

The level of excitement from local leaders; the philanthropic community; our students, faculty and staff; and our colleagues at other institutions eager to see this project come to fruition clearly shows this is a plan that has lit a spark within. We are eager to seize this opportunity and we look forward to the exciting times ahead for the entire USF System!

Thank you for your continued support.

***President Judy Genshaft***

***University of South Florida System***

