THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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September 7, 2010

To: Senate, Vancouver
c/o Lisa Collins, Associate Registrar, Senate and Curriculum Services

From: David H. Farrar
Provost and Vice President Academic

Re: Donald Rix BC Leadership Chair in Genetic Medicine

Recommendation:
I recommend the establishment of the Donald Rix BC Leadership Chair in Genetic Medicine made possible by funding from the province of British Columbia's Leading Edge Endowment Fund and the Genome BC Foundation.

Dr. Donald Rix was the founder and chair of MDS Metro Laboratory Services (now known as LifeLabs Medical Laboratory Services) and received an honorary doctorate from UBC in 2006.

Rationale:
The Chair will build on the outstanding foundation in genetic research at the Centre for Molecular Medicine and Therapeutics (CMMT), in the Faculty of Medicine, to generate knowledge vital to the understanding of the genetic causes, diagnoses, and treatment of many devastating inherited neurological and neurodegenerative diseases. CMMT is dedicated to the practice of world-class discovery research to uncover new insights in the life sciences and deepen our understanding in the determination and control of genetic susceptibility to disease. The Chair will demonstrate UBC's continuing commitment to worldwide leadership in this research field.

The Chair will provide leadership in the UBC community by leveraging campus resources, including established Centres and outstanding undergraduate and graduate programs. The Chair will spearhead new initiatives and foster integration of neuroscience discoveries by establishing a state-of-the-art systems biology approach to neuroscience, combining molecular genetics, functional genomics, and proteomic technologies with multidisciplinary research. The Chair will lead new collaborative research networks to study the nervous system with the goal to translate these findings into new diagnostics and therapeutics for human disease.

The Chair will hold a faculty appointment in the Department of Medical Genetics; be a Senior Scientist in the CMMT and the Brain Research Centre; and be affiliated with the Pacific Parkinson's Research Centre and the Child and Family Research Institute; all in the Faculty of Medicine.

The recommendation is supported by the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine.