I am honored to have received generous endowed support through the George and Barbara Bush Endowment for Innovative Cancer Research. Truly it is a privilege to be associated with two esteemed world leaders who lived their lives in pursuit of public service. They have inspired generations through their selflessness.

I have been fortunate throughout my career to have my work bolstered by kind and forward-looking individuals who wish to see a world free of cancer. Without this philanthropy, my team and I would not have been able to make advances against this terrible disease.

A decade ago, my laboratory discovered that long-term anti-hormone therapy exposes a vulnerability in breast cancer cells: estrogen-induced apoptosis. This changed the way we target cancer treatment. We have developed models of the only long-term androgen-deprived prostate cancer cells that will die with androgen treatment. Our overall challenge is to develop a unifying principle of how we can destroy breast and prostate cancers that have spread around the body.

It is critical, as a leader in medical research, that I continue to invest in the next generation of medical scientists by giving them guidance and opportunities to excel in my laboratory. Their future success in saving lives is the direct result of your investment with an endowment today. In Fiscal Year 2020, I was able to support three young researchers in my laboratory and within the department of Breast Medical Oncology. Their efforts directly contribute to research and publications.

Over the last 18 months, I have been elected to the National Academy of Medicine, was the Laurette of the Gerald D. Aurbach Award for Outstanding Translational Research from the Endocrine Society, and was the recipient of the Reynold Spector Award in Clinical Pharmacology from the American Society in Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics. To my surprise, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II appointed me as Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George for my contributions to women’s health. For me, this is a unique award as I am the only medical scientist in my lifetime to receive such an honor. The award is reserved for members of
the diplomatic service and for leaders within the security service. A handful of individuals who have achieved prominence overseas are considered. My contribution to the discovery of, and then development of, a drug group called selective estrogen receptor modulators (SERMs) was the first in medical science.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to be at MD Anderson and the Bush Endowment has helped make my work possible.


