



THE JOSEPH W. ESCHBACH ENDOWED CHAIR IN KIDNEY RESEARCH

WHEN JOYCE JACKSON LEARNED IN 2007 that **Joseph W. Eschbach, M.D., Res. '60**, had been diagnosed with lung cancer, she knew she had to move quickly.

Jackson is the president and CEO of **Northwest Kidney Centers** in Seattle, an organization that has generously supported UW Medicine's nephrology research, fellows, and faculty for many decades. But the campaign to create an endowed chair in Eschbach's name had special meaning for Jackson and her colleague, **John Stivelman, M.D.**, associate professor of medicine and chief medical officer of the Northwest Kidney Centers.

Eschbach, after all, had helped revolutionize kidney care for millions of people in the Northwest and throughout the world.



Joyce Jackson, the president and CEO of Northwest Kidney Centers, visits with Dr. Jonathan Himmelfarb. Himmelfarb is the first holder of the Joseph W. Eschbach Endowed Chair in Kidney Research, funded in part by Northwest Kidney Centers.

Soon after joining UW Medicine's Division of Nephrology in 1963, Joseph Eschbach and hematologist **John Adamson, M.D., Res. '64, Fel. '67**, began investigating anemia associated with chronic kidney diseases. They discovered that renal anemia develops when damaged kidneys can't produce enough of a hormone called erythropoietin or EPO. After Amgen produced the first synthetic form of EPO, Eschbach — a physician, trustee, and senior research advisor at Northwest Kidney Centers for many decades — was the logical choice to lead clinical trials of the drug.

When EPOGEN® became available to the public in 1989, the drug transformed the lives of people with kidney failure, allowing them to receive EPO treatments rather than undergo multiple blood transfusions — a tremendous benefit to patients and their families.

To pay tribute to the strong connections between Dr. Eschbach and Northwest Kidney Centers, and to celebrate Eschbach's critical contributions to the field, NKC made a significant contribution to establish the Joseph W. Eschbach Endowed Chair in Kidney Research, a position that will support further research, research that will benefit patients with chronic kidney diseases.

They were joined in this effort by **Kirin-Amgen**, a multinational partnership responsible for making EPO treatments available in America and Japan. The two companies requested that the Eschbach Chair be held by the director of the newly formed Kidney Research Institute, a



The day nephrologist Joseph Eschbach, M.D. (seated) was released from the hospital was the day he learned that the Eschbach Chair had been endowed. Joyce Jackson (right) and Dr. John Stivelman, chief medical officer of Northwest Kidney Centers (second from left), delivered the good news in person. Mary Ann Eschbach, Dr. Eschbach's wife, is at the far left.

collaboration between NKC and UW Medicine and an undertaking in which Eschbach had invested considerable time and energy.

As Jackson hoped, Eschbach learned of the chair shortly before he died in September 2007. He was delighted at the news, calling the chair the greatest honor of his career. He was especially pleased with the chair's research focus.

Jonathan Himmelfarb, M.D., recruited as the first holder of the chair and director of the Kidney Research Institute, also is pleased with the chair's emphasis on research. With Himmelfarb's recruitment, the institute has begun to initiate multiple kidney-related clinical and translational research studies. "New research will make a difference," says Himmelfarb.

Himmelfarb is excited about the reliable source of research funding provided by the chair, and he's particularly grateful for the stature that the name of Joseph Eschbach bestows upon the Kidney Research Institute and UW Medicine. With the help of Northwest Kidney Centers and Kirin-Amgen, it is a name that will long be remembered.