

## \$2.5 Million Endows Robert A. Knox Professorship

Money will advance public health research and care

Each year, 10 million children under the age of six die in the developing world from preventable causes. That figure comes, curiously, from an investment banker, Robert A. Knox, whose career might lead you to think he wouldn't carry such a grim statistic in his head. But Cornerstone Equity Investors, the firm BU Board of Trustees chair Knox (CAS'74, GSM'75) helped found, invests one-quarter of its portfolio in businesses involved in health care, a lifelong interest of its senior managing director.

"My mother was a nurse, and she hoped I'd be a doctor," says Knox, whose travels in Africa, India, and China allowed him to see the devastating health problems of underresourced countries. "I disappointed her."

Now the Robert and Jeanne Knox Foundation has given BU \$2.5 million to create a professorship named for Robert Knox. Jonathon Simon, a School of Public Health professor and chair of international health, is the inaugural

Robert A. Knox Professor. Simon, who leads BU's interdisciplinary Center for Global Health & Development (CGHD), has spent a quarter century battling childhood illnesses and death in the developing world. His appointment took effect on July 1.

Simon says the gift will support the center's Global Urban Health initiative, which exists to improve the health of the world's burgeoning and beleaguered city-dwelling poor.

"If you spend 10 minutes with Simon and you're not inspired, you've got to be a soulless person," Knox says. When he first learned about the CGHD, he says, he "was just blown away by how powerful it is" in mustering the intellectual artillery of BU's various schools. "Jon taps into the best talent and the best thinking from across the University," says Knox, who was struck by how Simon has been able to leverage big health improvements in poor communities from the most mundane of strategies: "Jon is interested in ways to train community health workers or birth attendants to address the very common things that result in these huge infant mortality rates...simple things like having blankets when babies are born so they're warm."

Simon estimates that as much as 80 percent of the 10 million annual childhood deaths in the developing world might be averted by such elementary health care. "Bob and Jeanne Knox's generosity will assist the center in its mandate to answer important health and development questions that directly reduce the unnecessary and avoidable deaths" of babies and mothers, he says. "If we do our job well, the Knox gift will be a gift that keeps on giving in terms of improved health of vulnerable populations worldwide." RB

## SMG Given \$10 Million for Two Chairs



Allen Questrom

Second big gift from the Allen & Kelli Questrom Foundation

ALLEN QUESTROM (SMG'64), RETIRED chief executive officer of several of the nation's largest department and specialty stores and a member of the BU Board of Trustees, and his wife, Kelli, have made a second major gift to the University. They have given \$10 million from the Allen & Kelli Questrom Foundation to the School of Management, which Allen Questrom credits with launching his 39-year career as a leader in retail management.

The \$10 million gift will endow two professorships and kick-start plans for a new School of Management executive education center, according to Kenneth Freeman, the Allen Questrom Professor and Dean of SMG. "This represents one of the most significant gifts in the history of the School of Management, as we approach our 100th anniversary



Robert Knox

CYDNEY SCOTT