

Donor Bios



Robert Wigton, M.D.

A 1969 alumnus of the UNMC College of Medicine, Robert Wigton, M.D., has been described as one of the pillars upon which UNMC's history rests, having long served as the "unofficial campus historian" – an interest that dates back to his childhood when he got his tonsils out at the medical center.

He served as professor in internal medicine at UNMC and held numerous academic and

administrative positions at the College of Medicine, including associate dean for graduate medical education (1976 to 2013), associate dean for academic affairs and chief of the section of general internal medicine. He currently serves as professor, internal medicine, and assistant dean of special projects in the College of Medicine.

The Wigton legacy spans three generations with several physicians and health professionals within the family serving on the UNMC faculty and/or graduating from UNMC, and several others serving in medical careers. These include:

- His father, Robert Spencer Wigton, M.D., was a faculty member for the departments of neurology and psychiatry;
- His grandfather, Harrison Wigton, M.D., practiced psychiatry with the department of neuropsychiatry;
- His brother, James Harrison Wigton, M.D., also practiced medicine in Omaha;
- His maternal grandfather, Charles Swift, M.D.;
- His uncle, Charles H. Swift Jr., M.D.;
- His cousin, Sharon Swift Rife, was a registered nurse and faculty member at the UNMC College of Nursing; and
- His cousin, Donald Swift, D.O.

An avid painter and photographer, Dr. Wigton loves portraying nature. He has long been a keen observer of both the natural features as well as the native plants and animals of the vast North American Prairie. His paintings include works in watercolors and oils. In 2018, his "Observations of Nature" collection was his second exhibit at the Connect Gallery and Studios at 3901 Leavenworth St. in Omaha and included more than 20 paintings.

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Leland and Dorothy Olson Foundation

The Leland J. and Dorothy H. Olson Charitable Foundation ("The Olson Foundation") was founded in 1993 by the late Dr. Leland and Dorothy Olson. Centered in Omaha, The Olson Foundation has been serving the local needs focused in education, health and the environment for the past two decades.

Dr. Leland J. Olson and his wife, Dorothy, were longtime philanthropists and investors in the future of women's health. Over the years, the Olsons remained committed to advancing research, education, and patient care at UNMC. Their family and The Olson Foundation continues that work to this day.

Dr. Olson received his medical degree from UNMC in 1944, completing his obstetrics and gynecology residency at UNMC in 1949. Dr. Olson primarily practiced at Methodist Hospital during his career. He was appointed to UNMC's volunteer faculty in 1952 and served in this capacity for 60 years, with his most final position as senior consultant.

A native of Palmyra, Neb., Dr. Olson had a large obstetrics and gynecology practice in Omaha and delivered thousands of babies during his career, retiring in 1986. He died in 2013 at the age of 92. A native of Bloomfield, Neb., Dorothy Olson earned her nursing degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and was a longtime nurse for the Visiting Nurse Association. She died in 2010 at the age of 88. She and Dr. Olson were married for 66 years.

The foundation has continued under the direction of the Olsons' three children – David, Karen and Nancy. Two of the children – David and Karen – went on to become physicians and both practiced at UNMC for part of their careers. David was in internal medicine, while Karen was in OB/GYN.

In 2005, the Olsons provided funding for The Olson Center for Women's Health outpatient facility, which occupies the entire fourth floor of the Durham Outpatient Center and is the largest outpatient clinic on the UNMC campus. The Olson Center for Women's Health was initiated in 1993 through the Olsons' generosity. In addition to housing an outpatient clinical facility, the Olson Center has provided more than \$7 million in research funding awards to UNMC researchers.

The Olson Center's outpatient facility is one of only a handful of truly multidisciplinary women's centers in the country. In addition to OB/GYN, the UNMC departments of internal medicine, surgery, radiology, and psychiatry also are represented, as well as the hospital's mammography, ultrasound, and physical therapy departments.

Since 1986, the Olson family has made multiple gifts to the University of Nebraska Foundation worth millions of dollars. In addition to the women's center, these gifts included:

- funding for two research floors in UNMC's The Lied Transplant Center to create the Olson Biomedical Laboratories;
- providing funding support for the Center of Nursing Science at UNMC;
- creation of a resident research fund and a distinguished chair for the UNMC Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology;
- funding for one of the earliest – and now largest – endowed chairs in the UNMC College of Nursing; and
- two endowed chairs at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.