

# Butterfly Town

Cancer Institute celebrates and honors lives



Written by Karen Carlson  
Photography by James Hawker

**V**achel Lindsay wrote, “Springfield Town is Butterfly Town.” SIU School of Medicine helped that effort on a Saturday morning in June when more than 300 Monarch and Painted Lady butterflies were released in the Thomas Garden of Hope at the SimmonsCooper Cancer Institute at SIU during the inaugural Butterfly Release. For \$40, participants “purchased” a butterfly to be released in correspondence with names read to honor and commemorate the lives of those afflicted with cancer. Other butterflies represented friends and loved ones not necessarily afflicted with cancer, but who have provided love, support and encouragement through difficult times. Music from medical student T.J. Gresch, '13, and a “Butterfly Blessing” enhanced the occasion.

“The emergence of the butterfly is a sign of renewal of life, and its flight symbolizes freedom and happiness,” noted the Institute’s brochure for the butterfly release. Proceeds benefit SimmonsCooper Cancer Institute for research, outreach, education and awareness. Cancer institute officials say they plan to make the release an annual event.

## Sumner Endowed Chair awarded to Dr. Hodgson

**Kim Hodgson, M.D.**, professor and chair of the Division of Vascular Surgery was named the first recipient of the **David S. Sumner, M.D.** Endowed Chair of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery at SIU School of Medicine.

St. John's Hospital, through the Friends of St. John's Hospital Foundation, established the endowment to honor Dr. Sumner's 23-year career in Springfield and his numerous contributions to the care of patients, as well as advancements in vascular surgery. Interest earned from the endowment will be used to further research and education in vascular disease.

"An endowed chair is the highest honor that a university can bestow on a faculty member who has had a distinguished career in a particular field of study," said **Dr. Gary Dunnington**, professor and chair of the Department of Surgery. "Dr. Sumner has meant so much to not only the medical students, fellows and faculty but also to his patients and this community. He has raised the bar in vascular surgery both nationally and internationally."

"St. John's is honored to recognize the accomplishments of Dr. Sumner through our support of this endowed chair. We are proud to partner with SIU School of Medicine to continue Dr. Sumner's legacy of serving the community as an exceptional clinician, researcher and teacher for generations to come," said Bob Ritz, President and CEO of St. John's Hospital.

For 23 years, Sumner was chair of the vascular surgery division and directed the fellowship program, both of which he founded at the SIU School of Medicine. He joined the faculty in July, 1975, and stepped down from the chairmanship in June, 1998. He helped train more than 20 clinical vascular fellows, four research fellows, 41 general surgical residents and countless medical students.

SIU School of Medicine Dean and Provost **J. Kevin Dorsey, M.D., Ph.D.**, spoke at a reception announcing the endowment. Dr. Dorsey was

a medical student when Dr. Sumner came to Springfield. "Dr. Sumner is a role model for us all," he said. "Drs. Sumner and Hodgson have done tremendous things for the School of Medicine. They are dedicated to our mission."

Dr. Sumner, a world-renowned leader in vascular surgery, was noted for his pioneering work with Doppler ultrasound. His non-invasive vascular lab at St. John's Hospital was the first in the region. The lab performs 600 studies per year.

"This is an honor I never imagined in my wildest dreams," Dr. Sumner said.

Dr. Hodgson is the director of the noninvasive vascular laboratory, the endovascular therapy program and the vascular surgery fellowship program. Dr. Hodgson said of his mentor, "He launched my career, and I owe him a great debt of gratitude."

The endowment fund is housed within the Friends of St. John's Hospital Foundation, where gifts may be directed to further support the fund in Dr. Sumner's honor. ●●●



Dr. Sumner, left, poses with Dr. Hodgson at a reception announcing the endowed chair.

Gifts to the Sumner Endowed Chair in Vascular and Endovascular Surgery

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