

UC San Diego Donor Featured on New Reality TV Show "Secret Millionaire"

La Jolla resident Marc Paskin has given more than \$1.3 million over the years to the Shiley Eye Center

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La Jolla resident and University of California, San Diego donor Marc Paskin recently starred in the second installment of ABC's new reality series "Secret Millionaire," which aired on Sunday, March 13. On the show Paskin traveled to Detroit to spend a week volunteering with local charities, not revealing his identity until the final day when he gave away nearly \$125,000 to the organizations with which he worked. Prior to his debut on "Secret Millionaire," Paskin had been quietly giving to several organizations, including more than \$1.3 million to UC San Diego's Department of Ophthalmology at the Shiley Eye Center and the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Retina Center.

Paskin, who built a successful career in real estate and currently heads Paskin Properties in San Diego, became acquainted with the Shiley Eye Center when his wife, Marsha, started having problems with her eyesight. Marsha Paskin suffered from diabetes, which had debilitating effects on her vision, progressing towards blindness. Thanks to retinal surgery at the Shiley Eye Center, her eyesight was saved and corrected to 20/20 vision.

"Marc saw firsthand how detrimental diabetes and other diseases can be to the eye, and what a frightening experience that can be for an otherwise functioning person," said William Freeman, M.D., professor of ophthalmology at UC San Diego and director of the Jacobs Retina Center. "After his wife passed away, Paskin felt compelled to help."

Paskin's initial gift of \$1 million to the Shiley Eye Center provided critical funding for the 2006 expansion of the center, enabling it to meet increasing patient demand and burgeoning research activities. In recognition of his generosity, a clinic in the expanded facility is dedicated to the late Marsha Paskin.

In addition to supporting clinical services, Paskin gave more than \$300,000 to the Jacobs Retina Center—the only freestanding retina research center in the United States—to fund cutting-edge research of retinal diseases that cause blindness and vision loss, including diabetic retinopathy. With a team of internationally recognized scientists, the center is developing new drug therapies, improving surgical techniques and technologies, and using gene therapy to restore eyesight.

Currently, Paskin's gift is supporting a number of exciting research projects, including a groundbreaking project to develop an artificial retina. The project is a collaborative effort between the Jacobs Retina Center and the Jacobs School of Engineering to develop photosensitive nanowires, which are similar to rods and cones found in the human eye and have the potential to restore eyesight in patients with certain retinal diseases.

Also supported by Paskin's gift, researchers at the Jacobs Retina Center and the department of chemistry are developing a new system for injecting drugs into the eye. While current treatment for difficult retinal diseases require monthly injections, this new system—based on silicon particles—would reduce the number of injections needed to one or two per year.

To learn more about the research and clinical services offered at the Shiley Eye Center, and how private support can make a difference, visit www.shileyeye.ucsd.edu. To watch the episode of "Secret Millionaire" featuring Paskin go to <http://abc.go.com/shows/secret-millionaire/>.

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