# Legacy Society

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#### VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2: FALL 2020

# MAKING HEALTHY EATING SAFER AND MORE AFFORDABLE

Do you enjoy healthy eating with plentiful salads, vegetables, and fruit? These fresh foods are a luxury for some. People who live in urban "food deserts" do not have regular access to fresh and healthful produce, largely because of these items' perishability and expense. But now researchers at the Danforth Center have discovered a means of fighting a common agricultural problem that may improve both quality and price.

Fungal diseases cause substantial losses of agricultural harvests each year. The fungus causing gray mold disease is a major problem for farmers growing fresh produce, such as strawberries, grapes, raspberries, tomatoes, and lettuce. To combat the problem, farmers must resort to dangerous and expensive chemical fungicides. Danforth Center Principal Investigators Dilip Shah, PhD, and Kirk Czymmek, PhD, with Postdoctoral Associate Siva Velivelli, PhD, and collaborators at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, have discovered a natural and potentially less expensive alternative.

They have identified a natural substance occurring in a legume (the bean family) that proved effective in inhibiting growth of the fungus causing gray mold when sprayed on tomato plants. The results of their research were recently published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*.

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# **HEALTHY EATING** cont.

When you support the Danforth Center, you are helping find sustainable solutions to some of the 21st century's most pressing challenges. Planned gifts can create a legacy of support for projects with real-world impact. Call 314.587.1071 for more information.

"Discoveries like this can provide farmers with sustainable alternatives. It's better for farmers, for consumers, and for the environment."

**Dilip Shah, PhD,** Danforth Center Principal Investigator



Siva Velivelli, PhD; Dilip Shah, PhD; and Hui Li from the Shah lab.



## **DONOR PROFILE:**

Beth Early, retired teacher and Danforth Center Legacy Society member

## **A LIFETIME OF SERVICE**

Beth Early has known since third grade that she wanted to help other people. "My teacher that year was so creative and caring. She inspired me." Beth would go on to lead a 30-year career in teaching, both in special education and in private school.

A friend of Dr. William H. "Bill" Danforth from Camp Miniwanca, Beth was intrigued when she learned about the work of the Danforth Center. "I started attending Conversations events and learned a lot.

What struck me most of

all was the difference between the haves and the have-nots. The Danforth Center is trying to equalize that, which appeals to me tremendously."

Even after a lifetime of teaching, she still wanted to give back. "My father taught me to save money, so I saved, and now I have the privilege to support the causes that I care about." Beth wanted to make sure she could care for herself throughout her life, so she decided to include the Danforth Center in her will, thus becoming a member of the Legacy Society.



In Memoriam William H. Danforth, MD April 10, 1926 – September 16, 2020

## **REMEMBERING WILLIAM H. DANFORTH**

William Henry Danforth, MD, Founding Chairman of the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center and Chancellor Emeritus of Washington University in St. Louis, passed away on September 16, 2020 at the age of 94.

Bill — as he always asked others to call him was a shining example of selflessness, humility, and dedication to the greater good. He brought a passion for excellence and an unwavering commitment to serving others.

After a career as one of the nation's top university administrators, Bill "retired." It was his vision to build a "Silicon Valley for plant science" that would unite and uplift his beloved hometown, St. Louis, and improve agriculture for a healthy planet "for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren." He founded the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center in 1998, served as chairman through 2013, and remained active until most recently. Even as we remember Bill for his remarkable public achievements, we recall with great admiration his exceptional personal character, his passion for knowledge, his courtesy and humor. **He truly believed that all of us have a common purpose in life: to help others and improve the world.** 

This is the spirit in which Bill founded the Danforth Center, and we believe that we best honor his memory by continuing the vital work that he envisioned and so generously supported. Let us all go forward with profound gratitude for the privilege of knowing this great man and with determination to preserve and build on his legacy.





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Modern ag isn't sustainable, and our environment is suffering. Help the Danforth Center make a difference when you create a planned gift. Whether an IRA rollover or a gift of appreciated stock, your gift can make a difference for you in your lifetime—and for future generations. To discuss your gift to plant science, sustainability, and a stronger St. Louis, call 314.587.1071.

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