



For Immediate Release

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San Diego Blood Bank Secures Funding from Prominent Local Foundations to Advance Precision Blood™ Initiative and Clinical Trial with Rady Children's Hospital

*The clinical trial will be set in motion to test how precise blood matches
prove to have better medical outcomes on chronically transfused patients;
Additional donors are needed to secure matching funds
and further develop the program*

San Diego, Calif. – Sept. 18, 2023 – Leaders at [San Diego Blood Bank](#) announce they have secured generous funding of approximately a quarter of a million dollars from the [Cushman Foundation](#) and the [David C. Copley Foundation](#) to expand their research and advance an important clinical trial for the San Diego Blood Bank's Precision Blood Program. This funding catapults their groundbreaking [Precision Blood™](#) initiative forward as they embark on an exciting clinical trial partnership with [Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego](#).

"The grant funds awarded by the Cushman Foundation and David C. Copley Foundation has a transformative impact on the Precision Blood™ initiative at the San Diego Blood Bank, says Nikhil Nayak, chief business officer, San Diego Blood Bank. "The funding now allows us to move forward with the purchase of a tube sorter machine and 50 tube racks which are needed to increase our Precision Blood™ processing capabilities for selective donor and patient blood testing that is necessary for these clinical trials. We will also be able to expand our Precision Blood™ lab space available to house the necessary equipment and support on-going clinical studies. We are extremely grateful for their contributions."

The expansion of the [Precision Blood™](#) initiative was launched in April 2023, with hopes to raise funds to continue their research, increase blood donations that could be tested, and secure a hospital partner to begin clinical trials. Within just four months, San Diego Blood Bank has achieved these critical milestones and can now continue their research to know how Precision Blood™ is positively changing the lives of chronically transfused patients.

The groundbreaking blood-typing system matches blood donation recipients with blood donors of more than 30 different blood groups using 300 antigen markers and has proved to reduce

adverse reactions generally experienced by patients who are blood transfused.

San Diego Blood Bank has the opportunity to amplify the impact of David C. Copley Foundation's grant of \$125,000. Leaders at the Foundation have also offered a matching grant of \$67,500 if San Diego Blood Bank can secure new donations or pledges of the same amount or greater by June 1, 2024. The collective amount will fund another tube sorter machine and additional tube racks, which will enable further expansion of the Precision Blood™ program.

Clinical trials at Rady Children's Hospital will match patients with Precision Blood™
Precision Blood™ is already improving medical care for patients like 9-year-old Kamila, who was born with a genetic blood disorder known as thalassemia, a chronic condition that requires lifelong blood transfusions. The process is one that is all too familiar to Kamila and her family, as they've had to experience Kamila's blood transfusions since she was only two months old. To date, she has received more than 158 blood transfusions. Thanks to generous blood donors and San Diego Blood Bank's Precision Blood™ initiative partnering with the hematologists and blood transfusion specialists at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego, Kamila now receives transfused blood that is more precisely matched to her own, potentially minimizing adverse reactions and helping her to thrive.

"Blood supply safety is crucial, especially for young children with inherited blood disorders who require regular blood transfusions for health and wellbeing. The purpose of this study is to compare patient outcomes between the current standard of care blood transfusions and Precision Blood™ matching. This includes comparing how well blood is matched, how often a transfusion is delayed due to lack of matched unit, and how often transfusion reactions occur," said Dr. Courtney Thornburg, medical director of the Hemophilia and Thrombosis Treatment Care Center at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego. "We believe the results will show better patient outcomes in those receiving Precision Blood™ matched units."

However, the success of the Precision Blood™ initiative requires a diverse blood donor pool that can provide the vital blood products needed for research, typing, and matching for patients. While San Diego Blood Bank outperforms many other blood banks nationwide in its efforts to recruit donors that reflect the diversity of its regional community, the organization realizes there is still work to do. For instance, 63% of its blood donors are Caucasian, while only 1.5% of donors are Black and 11.6% are Hispanic. This is why the organization is actively becoming involved in more BIPOC community events throughout the county, hoping that through educating more diverse donors—particularly those who identify as Black and Hispanic—more people will step forward and donate blood to make Precision Blood™ even more impactful for more patients.

How the public can help San Diego Blood Bank's Precision Blood™ program

Right now, San Diego Blood Bank needs the community's support to diversify its blood pool. Blood donations from all community members can make a difference in the continued Precision Blood™ research.

San Diego Blood Bank is also in search of additional funding to meet the challenge grant from David C. Copley Foundation for additional processing equipment and to expand the personnel needed to support the Precision Blood™ program and clinical trials.

"We are currently performing one run weekly, consisting of approximately 300 samples. With additional financial support, we will be able to scale to 400 samples per run and provide staffing to offer a higher frequency of testing, with a long-term goal of five weekly runs," says Nayak. "Our continued fundraising goal to meet the match challenge from the David C. Copley

Foundation as well as an additional \$100,000 will provide support for a Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego Research Coordinator and the necessary Quality and Regulatory personnel to ensure a successful pediatric hematology clinical outcomes trial."

Prospective partners are encouraged to contact Cheryl Castro-Lector, director of development, San Diego Blood Bank at 619-400-8214 or clector@sandiegobloodbank.org.

About San Diego Blood Bank / Southern California Blood Bank

San Diego Blood Bank is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization also operating as Southern California Blood Bank, serving hospitals throughout Southern California. San Diego Blood Bank is dedicated to community health by providing a reliable supply of blood to patients in need. Our vision is to further ensure the health of our community by simultaneously delivering related health and wellness education and services and collaborating with various partners in medical research. San Diego Blood Bank currently operates nine fixed-site donation locations and 10 bloodmobiles. For more information about SDBB, visit SanDiegoBloodBank.org or connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego

[Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego](#) is the largest children's hospital on the West Coast and one of the nation's top pediatric health care systems. Ranked as one of the 10 best children's hospitals in the nation by U.S. News and World Report in 2023, Rady Children's includes a 511-bed pediatric hospital that serves as the largest provider of comprehensive pediatric medical services in San Diego, southern Riverside and Imperial counties. With more than 40 locations, Rady Children's is the only health system in the San Diego area dedicated exclusively to pediatric health care and is the region's only designated pediatric trauma center. Rady Children's is a nonprofit organization that relies on donations to support its mission.

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