



**For Release:** May 18, 2016

**Contact:** Taylor Wilson, Nebraska Medicine – [twilson@nebraskamed.com](mailto:twilson@nebraskamed.com), 402.559.7037  
Tom O'Connor, UNMC Public Relations – [toconnor@unmc.edu](mailto:toconnor@unmc.edu), 402.559.4690  
Robb Crouch, University of Nebraska Foundation – [robb.crouch@nufoundation.org](mailto:robb.crouch@nufoundation.org), 402.458.1142

## **82-foot lighted glass tower to serve as cancer center 'cornerstone'**

**Omaha, Neb** – An 82-foot lighted glass tower designed by Omaha artist Jun Kaneko will be constructed in front of the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center on the campus of the University of Nebraska Medical Center and its clinical partner, Nebraska Medicine.

The tower, which is made possible with a gift from an anonymous donor, is expected to be completed by next spring when the cancer center is expected to open. The tower itself is actually 75-feet high, but its 7-foot base brings it to 82-feet.

The project was announced today at a news conference hosted in a gallery space provided by Kaneko in downtown Omaha.

Kaneko is calling the tower "Search." He began working on it in January. It will be located at the corner of 45th Street and Dewey Avenue.

The corner will be reconfigured to include a roundabout. The glass tower will be located in the middle of the roundabout. It will be placed on a pedestal made of black and white granite and surrounded by black and grey pavers in radiating concentric rings in the 36-foot wide roundabout around the tower and 16-foot wide truck skirt lane.

"It's a beautiful site. It fits perfectly," said Kaneko, who has done art projects around the world. "The cancer center is like a huge creative center. To be next to that kind of building, it's an honor. I really appreciate this opportunity. It's going to be in my hometown. I can't wait to see the piece up."

UNMC and Nebraska Medicine are thrilled to have Kaneko doing the project, said UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.

"We are really fortunate to have an iconic representative of the Omaha community doing a major art feature for the medical center," said Dr. Gold, who also chairs the Nebraska Medicine advisory board. "The glass tower will be widely appreciated by our students, faculty and staff as well as the whole community. It will be a beacon of light that will spread far and wide from our campus."

Kenneth Cowan, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center, said, "It will be a cornerstone of the cancer center – a guiding light for patients. It ties in perfectly into the importance of art and healing."

He noted that the tower will provide “a spectacular doorstep to the medical center” and will be visible for several blocks to the north on Saddle Creek Road as well as from the south and west.

“This is all about the intersection of art and medicine,” said Jim Linder, M.D., chair of the Creative Board for Kaneko and former interim president for the University of Nebraska. “The pattern in the tower matches what we see in the laboratory. It is very similar to the fundamental structure of DNA and bears a close resemblance to what is seen with normal and abnormal chromosomes. It will serve as a great landmark for the cancer center.”

Gail Walling Yanney, M.D., a committee member of the Healing Arts Program at the Buffett Cancer Center, had high praise for Kaneko. “He’s a true gem in our community,” she said. “He’s a local artist who has international renown.”

The Search Tower is part of a series of art projects associated with the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center through the Healing Arts Program and the One Percent for Art Program, in which 1 percent of the cost of building is set aside for art.

Other major art projects include:

- The Chihuly Sanctuary by Dale Chihuly, one of the world’s foremost artists working in glass.
- Leslie’s Healing Garden, an outdoor, year-round garden made possible with a gift by Marshall and Mona Faith of Omaha. The Faiths’ daughter, Leslie, died of cancer more than 60 years ago.
- A metal curtain wall on the outside of the building by Rob Ley of Los Angeles. Light and color will reflect off the metal curves.
- A large-scale painting for the cancer center lobby by Suzy Taekyung Kim of Brooklyn, N.Y. The painting will feature eight customized wood panels.

Dr. Walling Yanney said it’s anticipated that hundreds more original works of art will eventually round out the program – all designed to provide patients, staff and visitors with inspiration, comfort and calm, while also creating an atmosphere that feels distinctly different from the traditional hospital setting.

*The Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center – a National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center – is a collaboration of Nebraska Medicine and the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, Neb. The new cancer center will open in early 2017 with cancer research at the Suzanne and Walter Scott Cancer Research Tower and clinical treatments at the C.L. Werner Cancer Hospital.*

# # #