Media Release
Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Fundraising supports vital devil research

The generosity of the community continues to directly fund the fight against the Devil Facial Tumour Disease, with the Save the Tasmanian Devil Appeal today distributing more than $600,000 to a range of research projects.

This is a record funding amount awarded by the Appeal, with ground-breaking research projects at the University of Tasmania, Deakin and Cambridge benefiting from the community support.

Devil Appeal manager Rebecca Cuthill said the projects supported would improve our knowledge of the devil’s immune system, determine how the disease operates in the wild, and assist with the refinement of a possible one-shot vaccine.

“The fate of the Tasmanian devil has touched the hearts of people around Tasmania, and beyond, and we’ve continued to see generous contributions from donors large and small,” Ms Cuthill said.

“To see world class research being conducted is indeed heartening and we are so grateful for the support we receive, which ultimately allows us to fulfil our primary mission: to secure the future for the Tasmanian devil in the wild.”

A total of $628,000 has been distributed through ten Dr Eric Guiler Research Grants and two honours scholarships – one Tall Foundation Dr Eric Guiler Tasmanian Devil Honours Scholarship and one Dr Eric Guiler Devil Honours Scholarship – and funding towards the devil vaccine research being conducted at the University of Tasmania’s Menzies Institute for Medical Research.

The grants and scholarships are named after Dr Guiler in recognition of his work in zoological teaching and research.

The projects funded include:

- Evaluation of the role natural killer (NK) cells in protection against DFTD
• Deciphering the cellular origin of the second Devil Facial Tumour Disease (DFT2)
• Proteomics for biomarker analysis in Tasmanian devils: towards a pre-clinical DFTD test
• Distribution, prevalence and epidemiology of DFTD and DFT2 in southern Tasmania
• A new reference genome for the Tasmanian Devil
• Nature’s solution, do immunoglobulins fight cancer in Tasmanian devils?

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