



## Everyone at NCRC can now enroll in Duke's MURDOCK Study

*'The MURDOCK Study can really unite' more than 1,000 people who work for campus partners*

**KANNAPOLIS, N.C.**—Nick Gillitt, PhD, was swinging a golf club when he first heard about Duke University's MURDOCK Study.

The director of the Dole Nutrition Research Institute in Kannapolis, Gillitt was in the tee box at the Club at Irish Creek in 2010 when he learned of the long-term clinical research study based at the North Carolina Research Campus (NCRC). The Dole institute is also located at the NCRC.

By the end of the round, Gillitt had decided to enroll.

"I'm a scientist working in the areas of nutrition and health, and when I'm trying to educate consumers about the health benefits of fruits and vegetables, I know the value of clinical research," Gillitt said. "Enrolling in the MURDOCK Study for me was walking the walk, not just talking the talk."

Gillitt was among the first workers at the research campus to join the MURDOCK Study Community Registry and Biorepository. Until recently, people who work at the campus had to live in one of the study's 20 eligible zip codes.

That's changed. Now, they all have the opportunity to join Gillitt and become MURDOCK Study participants, regardless of home address.

"We are excited to announce that the geographical requirement for enrollment in the MURDOCK Study has been waived for the more than 1,000 people who work for the North Carolina Research Campus partners," said Ashley Dunham, PhD, director of operations for Population Health for the Duke Translational Research Institute, which manages the MURDOCK Study and related research based in Kannapolis.

Duke University hosted the NCRC-MURDOCK Study Mass Enrollment all day on Friday, Sept. 25 in the David H. Murdock Research Institute (DHMRI). Full-time and part-time employees who work for any employer on the campus now qualify for enrollment. City of Kannapolis employees who will work in the municipal building under construction on the campus also can enroll.

"The MURDOCK Study provides an opportunity for our community to become part of a study that will impact our generations for years to come," said Leonard L. Williams, PhD, interim director and lead scientist for Food Safety and Microbiology at North Carolina A&T State University's Center for Excellence in Post Harvest Technologies in Kannapolis. "This includes understanding how important factors such as gender, age, sex or race can contribute to the manifestation of chronic illnesses or disease in so many people."



Williams enrolled during the Sept. 25 event on campus and encouraged other men and African Americans, who are under-represented in the study, to join.

“As an African-American male, it is important to continue to understand why biomarkers for certain cancers such as colon-rectal or prostate cancer are higher among African-American males and the importance of finding viable solutions to improving both the detection and survival rate,” Williams said. “I am grateful to the work of the researchers and staff of the MURDOCK study and look forward to the scientific breakthroughs as a result of this study.”

People who work on the campus represent 20 different research centers, universities and companies engaged in almost countless efforts to transform science, said Perla Nunes, who leads community engagement and outreach for the MURDOCK Study.

“Now, we can all join the same effort,” Nunes said. “The MURDOCK Study can really unite us.”

The MURDOCK Study, which has nearly 12,000 participants and is one of the most unique studies of its kind, is an example of the innovative research occurring on the campus, Gillitt said.

“We’re working on things that really matter—health, disease, nutrition, agriculture,” he said. “The opportunity to enroll in the MURDOCK Study is another way to contribute to the important work taking place on the campus, and it’s a natural fit for people who work here and understand the value of clinical research and good study design.”

Gillitt said he might even use his own MURDOCK Study samples one day, when the Dole institute and DHMRI partner with Duke University on future research regarding health and nutrition. He won’t know it, however. MURDOCK Study samples are anonymous to scientists who use them to better understand health and disease at the molecular level.

Volunteers like Gillitt provide health information each year and a one-time donation of small samples of blood and urine. Duke University researchers and their collaborators aim to ultimately identify links across major diseases and disorders and find ways to treat and even defeat some of today’s leading causes of illness and death while tailoring treatment to the individual, also called precision medicine.

### **Duke University’s MURDOCK Study**

The MURDOCK Study, or the Measurement to Understand the Reclassification of Disease of Cabarrus/Kannapolis, is Duke University’s longitudinal health study based at the North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis, N.C. working to reclassify health and disease with advanced scientific technologies, expertise from Duke researchers and close collaboration with a strong network of local and regional partners. Duke launched the MURDOCK Study in 2007 with a \$35 million gift from David H. Murdock, founder and developer of the North Carolina Research Campus. For more information, visit



[www.murdock-study.org](http://www.murdock-study.org).

### **North Carolina Research Campus**

The N.C. Research Campus is home to corporate, academic and healthcare partners focused on advancing science at the intersection of human health, agriculture and nutrition. The NCRC is located on a 350-acre campus in Kannapolis, N.C., just north of Charlotte, home to the research power of eight world-renowned North Carolina universities and General Mills, Sensory Spectrum, LabCorp, DataChambers, Dole Food Inc., Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, the David H. Murdock Research Institute, Cabarrus Health Alliance and Carolinas Healthcare System. For more information, visit [www.transforming-science.com](http://www.transforming-science.com).

### **Dole Nutrition Research Institute**

The [Dole Nutrition Institute \(DNI\)](#) is Dole's nutrition arm created by Dole Chairman David H. Murdock as the world's definitive, accessible, scientifically validated resource on plant-based nutrition and health. DNI's five nutrition researchers harvest findings from universities around the world — including the eight schools working with the Dole Nutrition Research Laboratory — and distribute them via newsletters, reference materials, cookbooks and in-school, teacher-education programs that reach millions. For more information, visit <http://newsletter.dole.com/>.

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