



**BEZOS FAMILY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES
\$5 MILLION GIFT TO UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON'S
INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING & BRAIN SCIENCES
DEVELOPING MIND PROJECT**

June 8, 2010, Seattle, WA—The Bezos Family Foundation has announced a \$5 million gift, \$3M of which is a challenge, to the *Developing Mind Project*, a multi-year, multimillion-dollar initiative to foster new brain research discoveries and insights into how and when young children learn. It is a project of the [University of Washington's Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences](#). The Institute recently officially opened its new \$7 million I-LABS MEG Brain Imaging Center, which hosts the first brain imaging device in the world optimized for use with infants and young children.

"This emerging field holds great promise and we hope our gift accelerates the progress of this ambitious and pioneering research," said Jackie Bezos, President of the Bezos Family Foundation.

By advancing scientific discoveries in early learning and brain development, crafting actionable recommendations based on those results, and helping to educate policymakers, teachers, parents and the general public, I-LABS will accelerate the cycle from discovery to practice in early learning. I-LABS' activities are expected to boost the growing national awareness of the value of investments during the first years of life. It is in this critical period that children develop fundamental skills and relationships that allow them to be successful in school and in life.

The *Developing Mind Project* harnesses the expertise and vision of a world-class research team led by Professors Kuhl and Meltzoff with new brain-imaging technology. The MEG Brain Imaging Center will make it possible for I-LABS to have a dynamic view into the brains of infants and young children as they think, feel and interact with their surroundings. The new discoveries will be widely translated for the greatest impact on children and families.

"This grant affords us the opportunity to realize our vision of understanding the underlying mechanisms of learning in the developing brain," said Dr. Patricia Kuhl, co-director of the Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences and Bezos Family Foundation Chair in Early Childhood Learning. "Understanding how children learn requires that we make basic science discoveries, and then translate and disseminate them to people who can use them. It will transform how we educate our children."

Dr. Andrew Meltzoff co-director and Job and Gertrud Tamaki Chair added, "We hope to map the 'windows of opportunity' for learning in a variety of domains such as language, cognition and social-emotional development; identify the triggers that impede or enhance early learning; and determine bio-markers for earlier diagnosis of disabilities so that effective treatment programs can be designed. This gift is a game changer that will both nurture our current research and propel the science forward."

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ABOUT THE BEZOS FAMILY FOUNDATION

The Bezos Family Foundation is a private, independent foundation established by Jackie and Mike Bezos—who along with their three children and spouses—serve as directors. The Foundation works to strengthen educational opportunities for everyone, regardless of economic circumstances, and cultivate learning as a life-long process that begins at birth.

The Bezos Family Foundation Endowed Chair for Early Childhood Learning at the University of Washington was created in 2008 to support research and teaching in the critical area of early learning, and to promote the research findings to a broad audience of educators, parents, caregivers and the community at large. The first recipient is [Dr. Patricia Kuhl](#).

ABOUT I-LABS

The Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences is an interdisciplinary center founded in 2004, and is dedicated to discovering the fundamental principles of human learning over the lifespan, with special emphasis on work that will enable all children from 0 to 5 to achieve their full potential. By conducting innovative research and disseminating this knowledge to international audiences, I-LABS will quicken the pace from creating new knowledge about early learning to its use in society. The Institute's co-directors are Dr. Patricia K. Kuhl, Bezos Family Foundation Endowed Chair in Childhood Learning, and Dr. Andrew N. Meltzoff, Job and Gertrud Tamaki Endowed Chair, both at the University of Washington. Their scientific studies on children and adults have had a far-reaching impact on cognitive science, neuroscience, artificial intelligence, and education. Learn more about I-LABS at ilabs.washington.edu and follow the *Developing Mind Project* on Twitter @developingmind.

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