



December 4, 2008

Mr. Tony Martell  
Chairman  
T.J. Martell Foundation  
550 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10022

Dear Tony,

In this season, it is natural to reflect on the progress of the past year and look forward to the year ahead. We recently reviewed the high-impact research findings that our team published in recent months, and I was so pleased to see that many of them have their roots in the generous support from the T.J. Martell Foundation.

For example, the *New England Journal of Medicine* recently reported on the important work by Dr. Christine Chung and her colleagues to unravel a real Southern mystery. In 2004, a new targeted cancer drug, Erbitux, hit the market, but oncologists in several Southern states were startled that many of their patients were suffering life-threatening allergic reactions. Among them was Dr. Chung, who was recruited to Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center with start-up funds from the Martell Foundation to establish her own laboratory. Today, this talented young scientist not only is on her way to a promising career as an independent investigator, but she also has discovered a preexisting antibody that puts people in the South at higher risk of allergic reaction to this drug. Her work is leading directly to development of a test for the antibody, which will allow doctors to use this valuable drug more safely. All this is directly due to support from the Martell Foundation!

Also with the Martell Foundation's support, enrollment in the Southern Community Cohort Study is nearing completion. This historic initiative will enroll and follow 90,000 people in the South to learn why people in this region, and African Americans in particular, are at greater risk of developing and dying from cancer. The ultimate goal is to develop ways to reduce the heavy burden of cancer in Southeast, where we have the highest death rates from cancer in the country; the work will also yield a treasure trove of information to help fight diabetes, stroke, heart disease and other chronic health threats. Early analysis of data is just beginning. For instance, we've observed that lower levels of vitamin D in African Americans appear to be associated with higher rates of colon cancer. One hypothesis is that melanin in darker skin tones may interfere with vitamin D absorption from sunlight and that perhaps supplementation can help reduce risk. Intervention trials are being designed now to test this idea.

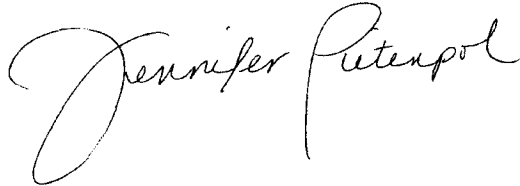
Importantly, Martell Foundation support continues to provide a strong foundation for clinical trials here at Vanderbilt-Ingram. These trials are the lifeblood of our cancer center as they take investigator-initiated discoveries made in our laboratories and give new treatment options for patients suffering from cancer. Without this important step in the discovery process, our work would never be translated into clinical advances that make a difference for patients and their families.

These are just a few of the areas in which our progress over the past year would not have been possible were it not for your longstanding support and that of the Martell Foundation.

With the continued partnership between the T.J. Martell Foundation and the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center, and our ongoing pledge to use your Foundation's resources carefully in ways that will have greatest impact, I know that many more exciting discoveries lie ahead of us in 2009. On behalf of the faculty and staff at Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center, thank you and the Martell Foundation for everything you do to make lives better for people facing cancer.

Wishing you happy holidays and the best for the New Year!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Pietenpol". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'J'.

Jennifer Pietenpol, Ph.D.