

news release

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New School Named for World-Renowned Scientist Dr. Freda Miller

CALGARY – Dr. Freda Miller School is the name of the new elementary school being built in the community of Evergreen. The Board of Trustees of the Calgary Board of Education approved the name for this school, expected to open in September 2020.

Dr. Miller is a cell and molecular developmental neurobiologist at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children and professor at the University of Toronto, as well as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

She has made seminal scientific discoveries over the course of her career. Her discovery of stem cells in the second layer of the skin has provided the conceptual basis for using skin as a major source for genesis of human stem cells. The stem cells she discovered are critical for the repair of injured skin.

At the same time, Dr. Miller discovered new mechanisms determining whether nerve cells live or die, findings that initiated new fields of research and that have major implications for our understanding of neurodegenerative disorders.

Dr. Miller has made significant contributions to understanding how stem cells build the brain during normal development and how this goes awry in neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism. This led to her recent discovery that the commonly used diabetes drug metformin can be used to promote repair of the injured brain.

These outstanding discoveries have been widely recognized within the scientific community, and have led to clinical trials for therapies that “wake up” our own stem cells to repair the injured brain and skin.

Finally, 25 of the graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who trained in Dr. Miller's laboratory now hold faculty positions at universities around the world.

Dr. Miller is a proud alumna of the Calgary public school system. She attended schools in Montgomery and Bowness for her primary and high school education and benefitted from the gifted program at Queen Elizabeth High School in her junior high years. She obtained her PhD in Medical Sciences from the University of Calgary. She maintains strong ties to Calgary, which is still home to most of her family. She lives part time in Canmore.

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Calgary Board
of Education

The school naming committee recommended this name to the Board of Trustees after gathering and evaluating stakeholder input on possible names. The school naming committee is comprised of CBE Trustees, parent and/or community representatives and members of CBE administration.

Dr. Freda Miller School will serve students in Grades K-4 when it opens.

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