

Centre named for philanthropist

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It may not ring a bell for some, but the name Peter Gilgan will soon loom over Bay St. in glistening, metre-high letters.

This week, the famously low-key Mississauga philanthropist and homebuilder will see his name installed on the new Peter Gilgan

Centre for Research and Learning, an innovative Sick Children's Hospital facility he helped fund through a \$40 million donation.

Gilgan, a Mississauga resident who is founder and CEO of Mattamy Homes — Canada's largest homebuilder — visited the Bay and Elm

Sts. site of the new centre Monday as the Hospital for Sick Children began installing the letters on the east side of the 21-storey building. The mounting is expected to be complete by Friday.

"It's really exciting," Gilgan said as he posed with an oversized letter "P"

in front of the centre. "I just think this is an amazing opportunity for transformation in kids' health care research.

"I think it's going to make a difference in the lives of many generations of young people."

The centre, which opens officially

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Sept. 17, is believed to be the largest children's health research tower in the world. Spanning 750,000

square feet, the building will house state-of-the-art laboratories and bring together in one place the hospital's 2,000 scientists, trainees and researchers, currently dispersed through six buildings.

The LEED-certified building was designed by Diamond Schmitt Architects and cost \$400 million. Gilgan's donation — the biggest contribution ever made to the hospital — composed a significant chunk of the funding for the high-tech centre.

For Gilgan, the hefty donation was a way to set an example and inspire others to give, too.

"Every campaign needs leadership," he said. "This time, I was leading by example by stepping up and doing what needed to be done to get the building built."

The Gilgan Centre isn't the only Toronto building to honour the avid philanthropist. In 2011, Gilgan donated \$15 million to help Ryerson University build its athletic centre in the former Maple Leaf Gardens.

It was named the Mattamy Athletic Centre in recognition of Gilgan, father to four children who attended the university.

- *Torstar Network*



Philanthropist Peter Gilgan holds a big "P" that's part of the signage for the new Peter Gilgan Centre for Research and Learning.

Photo by Mariana Ionova