

Dr. Elizabeth Stormshak, Prevention Science Institute director and College of Education professor of counseling psychology, is leading a new University of Oregon multidisciplinary initiative, Health Promotion & Obesity Prevention (HPOP; <http://uocoe.me/coe-cluster>). The initiative includes opening five new tenure-track faculty positions to help increase collaborative research across departments at the university to address the growing national health crisis tied to adult and child obesity rates. Nearly 35 percent of U.S. adults and 33 percent of children are classified as obese, with childhood rates having quadrupled during the past 30 years. The new faculty members will join forces with Prevention Science Institute's current team of researchers. With the integration of expertise brought by new faculty and the existing research strengths in UO's related disciplines of prevention, genetics, and human physiology, HPOP will apply biological and social perspectives to understanding what drives obesity. The HPOP initiative is part of the University of Oregon's Cluster of Excellence Faculty Hiring campaign and is being supported by a \$20 million endowment from Connie and Steve Ballmer.

"This gift allows us to build and share our expertise in this important area of public health," says Dr. Stormshak. "Our goal is to positively affect the lives of children and families, in Oregon and all over the world, as we strive to understand ways to prevent childhood obesity and promote healthy development."

The Ballmers' total gift to the UO is \$50 million, with the overarching goals of increasing access to higher education for Oregonians, strengthening UO's research efforts, and positioning the UO's academic excellence on a national scale.