



**James R. Downing, M.D.**  
**President and Chief Executive Officer**  
**St. Jude Children's Research Hospital**

James R. Downing, M.D., is president and chief executive officer of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. A world leader in pediatric cancer research, Downing's work is focused on understanding the genetic basis of cancer and using the information gained from this work to improve the treatment of children with cancer. He has dedicated more than two decades to making St. Jude the global leader in advances for childhood cancer.

Downing was instrumental in launching the Pediatric Cancer Genome Project (PCGP). The project made *TIME* magazine's 2012 list of top 10 medical breakthroughs. In 2013, Downing was a finalist on *TIME* magazine's 100 most influential people in the world. The PCGP has produced groundbreaking discoveries for four different types of brain tumors, four subtypes of childhood leukemia, a cancer of the peripheral nervous system, an eye tumor and the degenerative disorder commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease. The project has also produced new computational tools that benefit the broader field of genomic medicine.

Prior to taking the helm of St. Jude, Downing served as the institution's scientific and deputy director and as an executive vice president in the organization. He became the hospital's sixth chief executive officer July 15, 2014.

Downing is a Detroit native who earned his undergraduate and medical degrees at the University of Michigan. He joined St. Jude in 1986 after training in anatomic pathology at Washington University in St. Louis and completing a fellowship in hematopathology at the University of Florida in Gainesville. He became scientific director and executive vice president in 2004 and deputy director in 2011.

He has received numerous honors, including the Association for Molecular Pathology Award for Excellence in Molecular Diagnostics, which recognizes lifetime, pioneering achievement, particularly in regard to molecular diagnostics and molecular medicine. In 2013, Downing was elected to the Institute of Medicine, a prestigious branch of the National Academy of Sciences.