



IMPACT REPORTS

HEALTHCARE

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OUR GRATITUDE OVERFLOWS

Thank you to hundreds of talented and generous, industry professionals who took the time to participate in our 2022 sample swap.

Providing the nonprofit industry with free samples of donor communications has been a pillar of the work we do at the DRG Group for more than a decade. We simply cannot do this work with you—the amazing DRG Community.

Your work continues to inspire us—thank you for sharing it with us!

With endless gratitude,

The DRG Group

Impact Report

Inspiring Hope and Healing
Throughout 2021


Advent Health
Foundation | West Florida





Dear friends,

Thank you for standing by us through another year. Like many, we experienced moments of joy and times of hardship. We couldn't have gotten through any of it without the support of our generous donors and community members, board members and volunteers, and fellow team members – what a difference you've made!

In 2021, our Foundation team welcomed four babies and six new team members. Our department also grew as AdventHealth Heart of Florida and AdventHealth Lake Wales joined our West Florida family. And we had the privilege of being part of our local hospitals' tremendous growth.

Through the ups and downs of COVID-19, our health care heroes never stopped fighting to save lives and our hospitals continued to maintain health and safety protocols, receive awards and recognition for exceptional and quality care, and elevate our service standards.

And you helped make sure our brave team members felt loved through thousands of donated meals and care packages.

Our work starts within our Foundation family and we're excited to share some of our inspirations with you at the end of this report. The birth of my daughter, Lincoln, is what fuels me to continue to advocate for AdventHealth's mission. She was born premature at AdventHealth Tampa with several complications. As my family fought through our anxieties (and exhaustion), we found peace in the clinical care we received and the special visits from Chaplain Alex.

We look forward to what 2022 has in store for us and all that we can **accomplish together** to help those around us feel whole.

Sincerely,

Kristen McCall, Vice President
AdventHealth Foundation West Florida

PS: To view our 2021 donor roll, please visit
[AdventHealthFoundationWestFl.com](https://www.adventhealthfoundationwestfl.com)

Thanks to you

and 1,480 fellow donors,
the health of our communities, our patients
and caregivers persevered in 2021.



\$4,560,187

raised
for programs, technology,
capital projects and more.

We welcomed
747
new donors
to our Foundation family.



More than 26,500
in-kind donations
of meals and care
packages totaling
more than
\$156,900
supported our health care heroes.

948 AdventHealth
team members donated
\$292,217

through our Employee
Giving Program.



2021 Community Benefit

At AdventHealth, we strive to live our mission of Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ beyond the walls of our hospitals. We are committed to improving the health and well-being of everyone in the communities where we live, work and play. Each of our hospitals give back through charitable contributions, community engagement, and health education programs that help local residents feel whole.



\$4,974,259
Donated to Health Education
Fostering lifelong learning
for physicians, students and
team members



\$452,541,834
Provided in Charity Care
Financial assistance for
uninsured, underinsured
and elderly patients



\$2,374,158
Supported Spiritual Needs
Lifting up patients through
faith-based care and resources





\$15,607,144
invested back into our
hospitals in 2021.

Making An Impact

For more information or to make a gift visit
AdventHealthFoundationWestFl.com.



Moving Health Forward
\$10,179,747 in support of **AdventHealth Tampa** including the state-of-the-art Taneja Center for Surgery, advanced surgical consoles, diabetes education programs, and digestive health institute clinical trials.



Providing Dependable Emergency Room Care
\$3,358,501 helped fund our new **AdventHealth North Pinellas ER**.



Serving Our Community
\$1,034,918 in support of **AdventHealth Carrollwood** including a 3D mammogram machine, a Nursing Anne simulation mannequin, and a community-based health food program for kids.



Building a Healthy Environment
\$549,589 in support of **AdventHealth Dade City** and **AdventHealth Zephyrhills** including the Dade City ICU, the Zephyrhills Simpson Breast Health Center, a new child care van, and mission-inspired artwork.



Advancing Treatment Through Technology
\$232,361 funded leading-edge technology at **AdventHealth Connerton** for vent compressors, ECG machines, bladder scanners, and AccuVein finders.



Caring for Team Members
\$130,209 lifted up our care teams through meals delivered to vaccine sites, care packages, and restorative activities during COVID-19 surges.



Helping Others Feel Whole
\$114,722 to **AdventHealth Wesley Chapel** in support of full-body mom and baby simulation mannequins to further train and educate clinicians, books for pediatric patients, and car seats for new parents in need.



Keeping Families Safe
\$7,096 funded initiatives at **AdventHealth Ocala** like car seats and pack and plays for new parents in need.

The Power of Your Support

These stories represent the care you help make possible. Your generous donations impact countless lives and lift up patients, their families, and our care teams. Thank you.

AdventHealth Carrollwood Foundation

Saifuddin came to the US from India about 25 years ago. He became ill and lost his job and his housing. One day, Saifuddin fell in the street and was brought to our Carrollwood ER by a caring stranger. He'd had a stroke. Saifuddin faced extensive treatment and had no support system for a safe discharge. Our teams explored ways to get Saifuddin to the other side of care, healthy and secure. During Saifuddin's time with us, we tended to his care, his fear, and his humanity. Several months after being discharged, Saifuddin flew home.



AdventHealth Dade City Foundation

Bob experienced the AdventHealth difference after having heart surgery in Tampa and working on his rehabilitation at AdventHealth Dade City. Together, we helped him recover from surgery, improve his cardiac health, and take steps to get back to doing the things he loves – like regular walks and enjoying his hobbies. Crediting his attentive and compassionate nurses, Bob and his wife, Nancy, are grateful for the exceptional care that Dade City provides our community: “Close to home is always better when you need care.”



AdventHealth North Pinellas Foundation

Matt was on his way to work when he started feeling chest pain that worsened throughout the day. He arrived at the new AdventHealth North Pinellas ER where nurses calmed his fears and reassured him and his wife. It was determined that Matt had a heart attack. He was taken to the cath lab and received a stent. “I’m looking forward to hanging out with my wife. If I could say anything to the staff, it’s a huge thank you. The care I received was absolutely outstanding.”



AdventHealth Ocala Foundation

Jacob is a sweet and smart 9-year-old boy who was diagnosed with spina bifida at birth. When we first met Jacob, he didn't like leaving his wheelchair for fear of falling. Through laughter and Jacob's favorite country music, our pediatric rehabilitation team has helped Jacob persevere through challenging physical therapy sessions that have increased his movement. Jacob is now able to independently transfer out of his chair and stand with upper body support. Jacob's next goal is walking – and he's well on his way.

AdventHealth Tampa Foundation

“Our son, **Parker**, arrived to the ER by ambulance. He had already suffered three seizures. It was the worst night of our lives. Every step of the way, caregivers were compassionate and kept us informed. We cannot say enough about Dr. Theresa Rodgers who confirmed a diagnosis of benign occipital epilepsy. Her thorough care means Parker can be a kid without always worrying about seizures. AdventHealth has made a hard experience as easy as possible — and has given us more time to love our son.”



AdventHealth Wesley Chapel Foundation

Melinda and **Chuen** knew they were in good hands when they learned they were expecting their second child. At 36 weeks, the unimaginable happened. Their baby girl, Blue, died in utero. Melinda recalls that amidst her loss, the Wesley Chapel Baby Place team was “nothing short of amazing.” When Melinda and Chuen became pregnant again, they returned to the people who compassionately cared for them before – and they cherished the joyful delivery of a baby girl, Jade.



AdventHealth Zephyrhills Foundation

Linda and her sister were both diagnosed with the dreaded words, “You have breast cancer.” Linda credits her gifted AdventHealth radiologist with saving her life. “I had the best care. And each person I encountered made me feel like family. Because of my experience, I wanted to help bring 3D mammography to the AdventHealth Zephyrhills Simpson Breast Health Center. It's a comfort to know that my daughter, and other women, can receive the same exceptional care I did.”



How Generosity Heals



Caring for our Caregivers

We are grateful for all the generous people and businesses that donated hot meals, refreshing beverages, snacks, and care packages to help lift our health care heroes' spirits, including Patrick "the Giver" Rhodes. In 2021, Patrick facilitated more than 7,500 donated items to AdventHealth team members totaling more than \$41,800. He often made the deliveries on his lunch break and was always ready to offer kind and loving words.

"I am passionate about connecting our community and brightening people's days. I'm honored AdventHealth has allowed me to show kindness toward its health care heroes."

— Patrick Rhodes

A Legacy of Love

In 2021, Tom Pepin and his family not only continued their involvement with the Pepin Heart Institute at AdventHealth Tampa to ensure that people never have to travel far from home for advanced cardiac care, but they also contributed a gift to the Simpson Breast Health Center that will provide technology to further the center's exceptional capabilities and care.

"There is no greater gift than helping others. We are not only committed to continuously improving the quality of cardiac care in our community, but we are also committed to raising the standard of health care for everyone."

— Tom Pepin



Healing Our Youngest Patients

Our **Carrollwood ER** provides a personalized experience for pediatric patients through a soothing environment, colorful rooms, and a playful waiting area.



"The hospital can be a scary place, especially for kids. We're happy to support a friendly environment for children."

— Danny Persaud



"North Pinellas has helped me, my family and many others. I wanted to give thanks and help others in a way that includes my faith."

— Sandra Brock

Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ

Tarpon Springs resident Sandra Brock is helping people embrace their faith, find peace, and pray for health and healing by funding a new chapel at **AdventHealth North Pinellas**.

Expanding Care Close to Home

Our **Dade City** hospital has seen tremendous growth as we re-engineer the facility to include new spaces, leading-edge technology, and more.



"Our families are honored to support the hospital's vision to provide exceptional care right here in our backyards."

— Dale and Ann Maggard & Randy and Shannon Blankenship



"Whit had a kind spirit and an abiding love for Ocala. This fund is a perfect tribute to his desire to help others through programs outside of traditional hospital services."

— Diane Palmer

Accessible Health Care in Marion County

In 1985, Whit Palmer founded our **Ocala hospital Foundation**. In his honor, we started the Whit Palmer Memorial Fund in support of programs that address health care disparities.

Supporting World-Class Surgical Care

The new **Taneja Center for Surgery** is home for Tampa Bay's leading surgeons who use advanced technology to perform complex procedures that aren't available anywhere else.



"We knew investing in the center would positively impact lives for years to come and allow more people precious moments."

— Anthony Barkett



"We are committed to advancing patient care. This donation will provide more training and further our commitment to EMS excellence."

— Todd Yontek, MD

Advancing Emergency Services

AdventHealth's Dr. Todd Yontek supported emergency medical services through a gift that will fund needs like simulation mannequins that can be used by AdventHealth, local police, and other agencies.

Corporate Partners Program

Through the Corporate Partners Program, our Foundation works collaboratively with companies that are interested in making a transformative gift to help advance AdventHealth's patient care. Together, we identify where each company can have the most meaningful and lasting impact on the health of our communities. Since the start of the program in 2019, **our corporate partners have generously donated more than \$4,550,000** to support West Florida hospital programs and projects.



Our continued commitment to AdventHealth through corporate philanthropy is a reflection of the alignment of our firm's culture and values and the mission and ministry of AdventHealth.

— Paul Macheske, Vice President & Healthcare Principal at HuntonBrady Architects, P.A.

USF Federal Credit Union is proud to partner with AdventHealth and support its mission. It's been a pleasure meeting AdventHealth team members and sharing in their passions.

— Chris Fredricks, Director of Strategic Partnerships, USF Federal Credit Union



Our Corporate Partners

APG	HuntonBrady Architects	Robins & Morton
Apprio, Inc.	Johnson Controls, Inc.	Southern Glazer's Wine and Spirits Charitable Fund
Berglund Construction	KCI Communications Infrastructure	SouthState Bank
Batson-Cook Construction	Mellarius Medical	Tampa Bay Lightning
Brasfield & Gorrie	Mid Florida Armored & ATM Services	Tapper Ventures
Crystal Springs Preserve, Inc.	Pioneer Medical Group	The Jay Odom Group
DPR Construction	PT Solutions	TLC Engineering Solutions, Inc.
Duke Energy	Remediation Specialists	Tudi Mechanical Systems
Elder Automotive Group		USF Federal Credit Union
Heritage Insurance		

Signature Events

Our community members' health and safety are our number one priority, which is why we paused in-person events in 2021. We are excited to announce that our signature events will resume this year. Our events are a time for celebrating how one common purpose can bring people together to support moving health forward in our communities. Event proceeds benefit areas of greatest need throughout our West Florida hospitals. We hope to see you!

Fishing Tournament

Friday, April 1 | 7:30 am
Hula Bay

Our 2022 Fishing Tournament is sold out, but we hope to see you at the Starlight Gala or Golf Classic!



Starlight Gala

Sunday, Aug. 21 | 4:30 pm
JW Marriott Tampa Water Street

This year's theme is *Be the Light*. The evening features inspiring stories, silent and live auctions, a delicious dinner, and a special performance by Gavin DeGraw. We look forward to celebrating all the ways you've helped us shine.

Golf Classic

Monday, Nov. 14 | 8 am
Avila Golf & Country Club

Tee up for a morning of fellowship and fun! Once you are finished on the greens, you can enjoy lunch, live music, and awards.



Lisa Altman | Director, Corporate Philanthropy & Special Events

✉ lisa.altman@adventhealth.com ☎ 330-554-9087



Sam Lamia | Manager, Corporate Philanthropy & Special Events

✉ samantha.lamia@adventhealth.com ☎ 908-217-6716

At the Heart of What We Do

Our team is committed to helping people tell their best stories and live their best lives. We are fueled by the excitement that comes with building relationships and connecting people with their passions. We hope you enjoy learning more about why we're invested in AdventHealth's mission.



“



I am blessed to serve as a facilitator of gratitude to help support our teams that save lives and restore quality of life through whole-person care. I have seen the power of philanthropy at work and know it can truly make a difference for our patients, team members, this community, and my family.

Jenna Krager

Foundation, Executive Director
jenna.krager@adventhealth.com
AdventHealth Ocala



“



Being a part of this faith-based organization brings me joy. Since starting this role, I've developed lifelong relationships with our board members, donors and volunteers. There is a special sense of family within our hospitals and throughout our Pasco communities, which uplifts me every day.

Megan Miller

Foundation, Executive Director
megan.miller@adventhealth.com
AdventHealth Dade City
AdventHealth Wesley Chapel
AdventHealth Zephyrhills



“



I've lived in Tarpon Springs since I was 6 years old and there's no place I'd rather call home. I've watched the evolution of our hospital and I'm proud to now work at AdventHealth North Pinellas. Two years ago, my father's life was saved thanks to the incredible care provided by our North Pinellas teams and for that I am forever grateful.

Sofia Zaronias

Foundation, Executive Director
sofia.zaronias@adventhealth.com
AdventHealth North Pinellas



“



As an AdventHealth patient and a third generation Tampa Bay native, I am thankful for the compassionate care our hospitals provide our community. From the birth of my son to emergency services for my family, I trust our experts with my loved one's care. Our team and generous donors inspire me every day.

Kourtney Sanchez

Foundation, Executive Director
kourtney.sanchez@adventhealth.com
AdventHealth Carrollwood
AdventHealth Connerton
AdventHealth Tampa



“



How fortunate I am to work for an organization that believes in whole-person care for everyone. I love that my name badge reads, "I care for you like I care for my mom," which inspires my work every day. God blessed me with a career that allows me to make a difference in countless lives. It doesn't get any better than that!

Tracy Porter

Foundation, Executive Director
tracy.porter@adventhealth.com
AdventHealth Heart of Florida
AdventHealth Lake Wales



“



Making just one family's stressful experience a little easier energizes me to inspire others to give back. Throughout the last two years especially, we have learned the importance of caring not only for our families, but for our friends and communities. We are stronger together and when we all do our part, we are able to bring others moments of hope and joy.

Lisa Altman

Director, Corporate Philanthropy and Special Events
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AdventHealth Foundation
West Florida

Lily Conrad – Executive Director, Operations and Philanthropy Services

McKenzie Doll – Philanthropy Officer, AdventHealth Carrollwood, Connerton and Tampa

Caitlin Eason – Coordinator, Donor Relations and Annual Giving

Danielle Gantt – Director, Internal Operations

Sam Lamia – Manager, Corporate Philanthropy and Special Events

Kristen McCall – Vice President, Foundation West Florida

Brenda L. McGehee – Coordinator, Foundation

Tori Menneto – Specialist, Corporate Philanthropy and Special Events

Jennifer Russ – Director, Donor Relations and Annual Giving

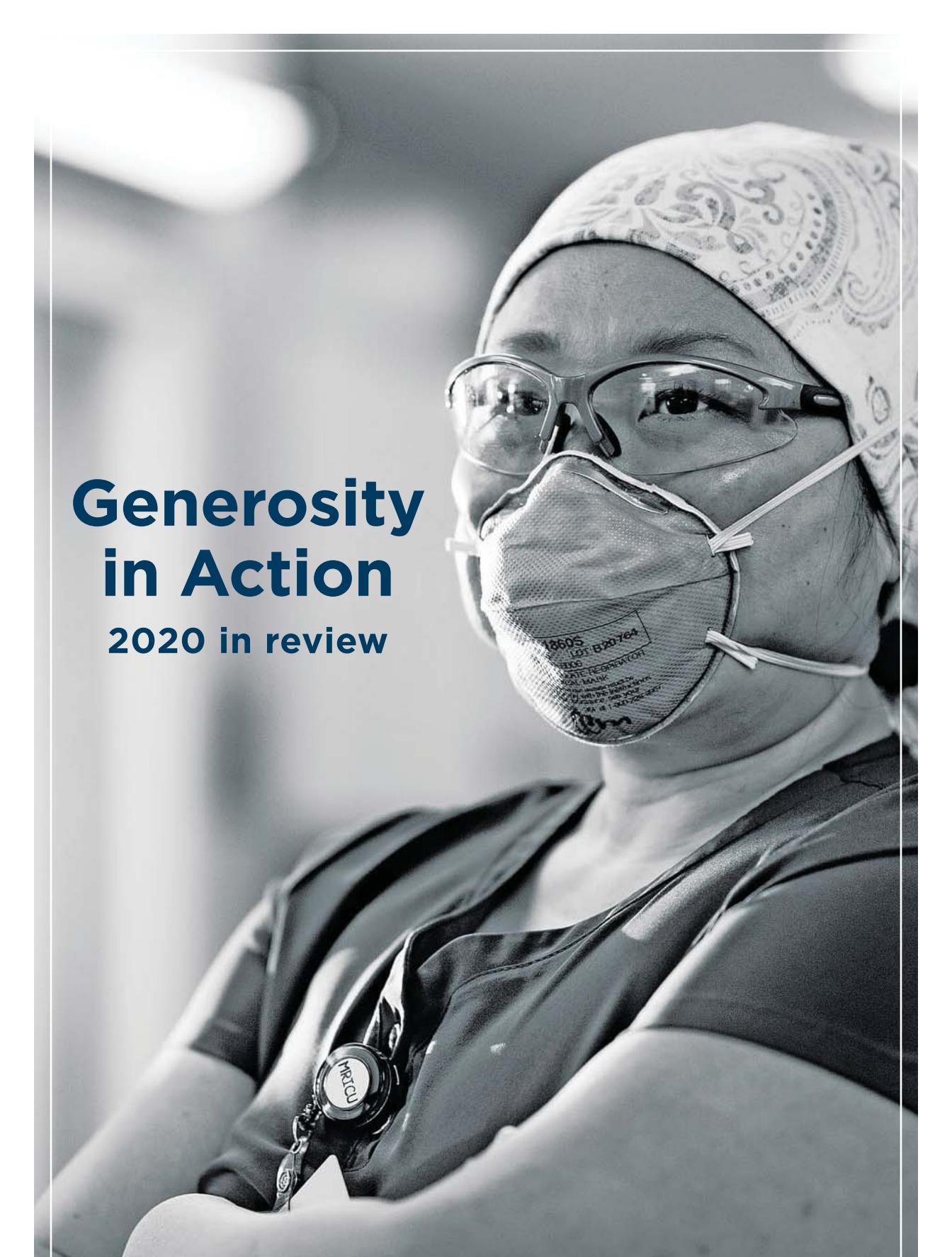
Nicolette Simms – Coordinator, Operations and Philanthropy Services




Advent Health
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Generosity in Action

2020 in review

 Advocate Health Care®
Charitable Foundation

We are  AdvocateAuroraHealth

 Aurora Health Care®
Foundation

We are  AdvocateAuroraHealth

A word from the President

Dear Friends,

There is no doubt 2020 was a challenging, yet inspiring year. On behalf of Advocate Aurora Health, I would like to express my appreciation for your steadfast support during this crisis. Now more than ever before, we see how philanthropy is pivotal in providing high quality, affordable health care for our patients and our communities. **However you supported us in 2020, please know how grateful we are for your generosity.**

Enclosed you will find the inspiring stories of health care heroes, patients and other donors just like you. Thanks to people like you, these stories illustrate how we've been empowered to respond to this crisis and beyond.

We can't thank you enough for your generous support and we'll always remember your spirit of giving during the pandemic. **We're so grateful to have donors like you alongside us on this journey - before COVID-19, throughout the crisis and as we navigate the path forward.**

Sincerely,



Randy Varju, FAHP, CFRE

President, Advocate Aurora Health Foundations

Chief Development Officer, Advocate Aurora Health



BY THE NUMBERS in 2020:

More than
\$6.2 million
donated to support
our COVID-19
relief efforts



Nearly
200,000
meals and snacks,
445,000
masks and hundreds
of other gifts
of gratitude
were donated for
frontline team
members and patients



Nearly
18,000
COVID-19 patients
discharged



\$44.6 million
raised by Advocate
Aurora Health
Foundations



More than
\$1.3 million
was distributed through
the Team Member Crisis
Funds, helping our health
care heroes overcome
personal crises



\$3.6 million
was raised by team
members through the
Team Member Giving
Campaign for
Advocate Aurora
funds and community
charities



Nearly
\$24 million
was distributed to
support programs,
research and
equipment

Always Advancing

Caring for the caregivers

Chris Wojnar is passionate about helping people. He's a critical care nurse at Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center in Milwaukee who often treats patients after a traumatic event or illness. He brings patience and passion to his job because he knows what it's like to need support.

"When I was younger, I was overweight and bullied. I actually attempted suicide," Chris shares. "But now, I just know I'm supposed to be here."

The trauma Chris experienced growing up along with the sadness he felt after losing a colleague in 2018, led him to seek out ways to become more resilient. His first step was to be open about his experiences in hopes of reducing the stigma around mental health issues.

"When you share things about yourself, it helps others realize they're not alone," he explains. That attitude has helped tremendously over the last year as Chris and his colleagues fight through a devastating pandemic.

Chris has sat at the bedside of patients with COVID-19 and floated to other hospitals to help where needed. He watched people lose their battles, and yet he continues to show up ready to help.

"We do this because it's a calling, we're meant to do it. But sometimes as givers, we focus and take care of others and forget to take care of ourselves," he shares.

Recently, Advocate Aurora Health launched the Together as One Peer Support Program at sites across the system, to empower team members like Chris to help care for each other. **The program was made possible thanks to gifts to the COVID-19 Relief Fund.** Employee ambassadors are trained to recognize and intervene when a colleague is impacted by stress within the workplace. Those ambassadors can also refer team members to specialized resources in Trauma Recovery, Mission and Spiritual Care, Employee Assistance Program or Behavioral Health.

Chris is excited to be an ambassador for the program. "Resiliency, in general, is not something you're born with, you learn it," Chris explains. **"We're doing such good work to create camaraderie in the workplace, and we couldn't do it without the people who supported this program."**



Improving patient outcomes

Because of the generosity of donors, the pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) at Advocate Children's Hospital was able to purchase four advanced airway simulation training tools. Airway task trainers simulate the anatomy of a person's airway, allowing for an immersive and interactive way for team members to train for intubating more difficult cases. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, these tools have served a far greater purpose than expected.



"We're using the trainers more than we ever imagined we would. We're learning how to place new pathways to help patients breathe. We can also practice with all the extra protective equipment we're wearing - masks, face shields and goggles," said Sandy McIntyre, nurse practitioner. "And if a patient has COVID-19, or is suspected to have it, there's a protective hood around them too, which can make it difficult to see what we're doing. That's no longer an issue because we're practicing so frequently thanks to these devices."

Your support helps team members adapt during a crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic forced Erica Berry, a patient care manager at Aurora Medical Center in Grafton, to adapt as a nurse in ways she never imagined. **Thankfully, generous donors provided Erica's team with iPads to help bridge the divide between isolated patients and their loved ones.**



In several instances, Erica's team provided end-of-life care. The tablets enabled the patients to spend more time with their families when personal connection was needed most.

"One patient's wife would call and sing to her dying husband daily. It was a heartbreaking situation, but also so comforting for the wife to be able to see her husband's face and for him to hear her voice," Erica says.

To put it simply, adapting to this virus has been difficult for many health care workers. **But the generosity of the community has helped team members like Erica keep going.**

Because of your support:

- **More than \$1 million** funded team member, nurse and physician education and professional development
- The Acute Care for Elders (ACE) Conference, hosted by Advocate Aurora Health, was held virtually for **nearly 1,000 attendees from 40 different states**
- **More than 5,000** integrative medicine services were provided to cancer patients at free and reduced costs
- The **Advocate Aurora Health Home Hospital Program was created**, helping patients receive care in their homes

Caring for You with You

Making sure patients don't go hungry at home

"No one should have to choose between buying their medication and feeding their children," shared Aisha Achesah, MPH, the program coordinator of the hospital-based food pantry at Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center.



The food pantry started in 2018 when Andrea Karoff, a social worker in the hospital's oncology department, noticed many of the cancer patients didn't know where their next meal might come from.

She heard patients were splitting their pills in half so they would have money to buy food or pay utilities.

"We wanted to reduce the barriers to helping someone live well and having enough food to eat is essential," Aisha explained.

The hospital partnered with Lakeview Food Pantry and began providing a 20-25-pound bag of nonperishable food to eligible patients once a month. The bag contains items such as canned meat and vegetables, pasta, oatmeal and other household essentials like light bulbs and toothbrushes. The hospital screens patients for need and found many require public transportation and some are even homeless. Your support to Advocate Aurora Health Foundations enabled the purchase of "wheelie bags" to help patients transport the items from hospital to home.

The program quickly grew from serving oncology patients to helping people in seven other service lines, with a long-term goal to include the entire hospital.

Foundation support also enabled them to partner with a local food distributor for a fresh produce delivery once a month for up to a year. In 2020, more than 3,400 pounds of food were distributed.

"I am so satisfied with this program. All the things I received helped me a lot, especially since I live with my daughter. It brought something extra to our household," shared a recipient. Another said, "The program helped to satisfy some of our most basic needs. I am thankful for it."

And Aisha is grateful for donor support that makes it possible. **"Why should our patients leave the hospital and not have everything they need? This is really filling an important gap for them and we are so grateful."**

You provided hundreds of free cancer screenings during a pandemic



Aurora Walker's Point Community Clinic is the largest free clinic in Wisconsin and exists to serve people who don't have other health care options. **Because of donor support, colorectal cancer screenings are provided to patients of Aurora Walker's Point at no cost.**

During the spring of 2020, community health workers developed an innovative, no-contact system to help provide screenings by arranging drop-off and pick-up of fecal occult blood test kits at patients' homes. Despite the circumstances caused by the pandemic, the clinic completed 83% of colorectal cancer screenings that were due.

"Patient after patient expressed gratitude for this offering," said Chris Casselman, Manager of Clinic Operations for Aurora Walker's Point. "Completing screenings at such a high rate during a pandemic is a huge accomplishment. **We are very, very grateful for the generous support of donors.**"

Colorectal cancer screenings at Aurora Walker's Point Community Clinic are funded with the support of the Judy Kerns Pence Cancer Fund and Kerns family.

You helped survivors thrive

At five months pregnant, Alexandra found herself homeless and in an abusive relationship with nowhere to turn. Fearing for her life and the life of her unborn child, Alexandra was on the verge of giving up. Then she was connected to the Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services' Safe Mom Safe Baby's Safe Home Environment (SHE) Program, which provided her with a safe place to live and inspired her to create a better life for her and her baby.



"Donor support provides safe housing, counseling and care coordination at no cost to the mother and her baby, giving domestic abuse survivors the access to the critical care and support that they need," says Shirley Combs, Healing Volunteer Coordinator.

The Safe Mom Safe Baby program is funded with the support the Junior League of Milwaukee.

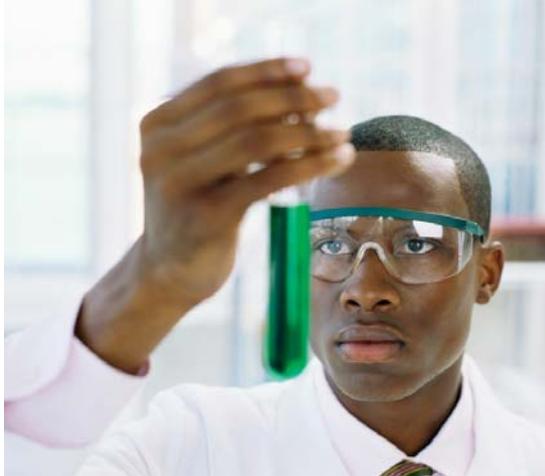
Because of your support:

- **3,100 meals** were provided to Milwaukee families through Aurora Family Service's Family to Family Thanksgiving
- **Nearly 350 unique patients** were served by the Mobile Dental Van in Chicago
- **Nearly 1,000 sexual assault examinations were performed** by specially trained nurses
- **1 million masks**, including 10,000 pediatric masks, have been purchased and distributed to community members
- **6,000 COVID-19 Symptom Relief Medication Kits** were provided to underserved COVID-19 patients in need
- **2,520 unique patients** were served at Aurora Walker's Point Community Clinic, the largest free clinic in Wisconsin

Pioneering Health

Your support is the backbone of this research

When COVID-19 first arrived in the United States in 2020, scientists and health care professionals knew little to none about the virus. Research has been critical to understanding how the virus is spread and how we can keep our health care professionals and community safe.



Sigrun Hallmeyer, MD, Medical Director and oncologist at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital is the principal investigator of a current research study that aims to better understand COVID-19 exposure in health care workers and their families. **It is completely funded by donor support.**

“Initially, we were a hotspot at Lutheran General,” Dr. Hallmeyer says, referring to the high number of cases reported in the Park Ridge, IL, area in spring of last year. “We want to know if that would lead to higher rates of professional exposure and infection among our medical staff. We also need to know how effective we are at protecting ourselves from the virus.”

The study performs antibody tests on nearly 500 hospital physicians. It started in September 2020, and at various intervals, those same participants donate blood and their antibody baseline levels are evaluated. The research also includes a questionnaire about their professional and social behavior, attitude towards social distancing, the wearing of physical protective equipment (PPE), and household environment. The study will continue for a year, but Dr. Hallmeyer says they’ve already seen some interesting data.

“In our first analysis from September, we saw that only 20 physicians tested positive for antibodies, which is 4% less than the general population,” Dr. Hallmeyer explains. “They’re performing high-risk procedures like intubating COVID-positive patients, but their positivity rate is lower than the general population.”

Approximately \$100,000 of Foundation funds have gone towards this study, mostly to cover the laboratory testing. **There will be more to be learned once the study is complete, but the results could impact the health and behavior of not just physicians, but the entire medical community.**

“Much of what we know about this virus is driven by clinical data. And without donor support, we wouldn’t have been able to do this. **Philanthropy really is the backbone to this type of research,**” Dr. Hallmeyer says.

Donor-supported research keeps older patients out of the hospital

Being released from a hospital to the comforts of home is the goal of every patient and caregiver, but hospital readmissions are quite common, especially for the elderly. Readmissions create an increased health risk, greater financial burden and are often preventable.

A frequent cause for readmission in older adults is delirium, which is essentially acute confusion. It can be life-threatening and has a one-year mortality rate. The Ed Howe Center for Healthcare Transformation, which is completely supported through philanthropy and part of Advocate Aurora Research Institute, is working to reduce cases of delirium and readmission rates.

The Bundled Hospital Elder Life Program, or HELP® and HELP in Home Care, adapted HELP© hospital protocols to the home care setting to prevent delirium and functional decline. In just a few short years, this transformational research has already been put into action and is reducing hospital readmissions, preventing delirium, and saving lives.

“The research involved changing the way team members practice, which is harder than it sounds. We were able to operationalize this protocol in the electronic health record and create an organizational infrastructure for Bundled HELP©,” shares Michelle Simpson, PhD, RN, director of the Ed Howe Center for Healthcare Transformation.

The program is a great example of collaboration between Dr. Simpson’s team, Jonny Macias, MD, the program medical director, and Mike Malone, MD, medical director of Aurora Senior Services and Aurora Health at Home. This collaborative research, made possible by generous donors, is truly making a difference.

“The purpose of research at Advocate Aurora Health is to improve patient health. Research results are translated into clinical care to help our patients and the HELP protocol is a great example. It’s a rewarding achievement for our researchers,” explained Nina Garlie, PhD, interim Vice President of Advocate Aurora Research Institute.



Because of your support:

- **More than \$4.1 million enhanced** research in many areas including cardiovascular health, precision medicine, oncology, endocrinology, Alzheimer’s and more
- Advocate Aurora Health authored **547** peer-reviewed articles
- **100 TytoCare devices** were purchased to support telehealth needs for children with high-risk medical conditions, enabling physicians to receive patient temperatures, listen to the heart and lungs and examine the ears virtually
- **497 clinical outcomes research projects** were active across the system in 2020

Donors making a difference

A community rallying together to support health care heroes

When Amy True Flota was challenged by a coworker on how to help during the pandemic, she reached out to a friend who is a doctor at Advocate Sherman Hospital and asked what team members needed. She learned hospital cafeterias were closed, leaving health care workers with limited options for meals.

With the help of her network, Amy raised \$13,000 and donated more than 2,500 meals over the course of four months. She was amazed at how many people and organizations wanted to help.

“The truth is, I have a really cool network of people that made this happen,” said Amy. “I feel so fortunate to have been involved. I formed some amazing friendships. It was very inspiring and very special.”



Making the world a better place in honor of their parents

In June, Lynne Becker and her three sisters experienced the tragic loss of their mother. Shortly after, their father became ill with pneumonia and was taken to Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center. Due to the hospital's COVID-19 visitor restrictions, only one daughter could be in his room to say goodbye as the three other sisters visited virtually from the parking lot. **After their father passed away, the sisters used the money from his memorial to purchase six iPads for the hospital, allowing other families to connect with their loved ones.** “Our parents raised us to make this world a better place and do things for others,” said Becker.



Helping team members in crisis

Jean was among the many Advocate Aurora Health team members to receive a bonus at the end of 2020 for her remarkable work and sacrifices during the pandemic.

Although she earned every penny, Jean's humble heart told her that others needed the bonus money. So she donated it back to the Team Member Crisis Fund, which provides grants up to \$1,000 to Advocate Aurora team members facing a financial crisis.

“Some people in need are single parents with small children, some have medical conditions of their own. I just appreciate so many of them who stepped up and took an enormous risk during COVID to help others,” Jean says.

More than \$1.3 million was distributed from the Team Member Crisis Fund to team members in need in 2020.

Supporting families despite obstacles

Every year, the Oak Lawn Fire Department collects toy donations for pediatric patients at Advocate Children's Hospital. But because of COVID-19, the hospital's donation drop-off policy was dramatically changed, and toy donations weren't allowed.

However, they were still determined to help. The firefighters decided to raise funds for the hospital's child life, creative arts therapies and education department. **They collected nearly \$7,000 in donations that will help children heal, express themselves creatively and feel like kids despite being hospitalized.**

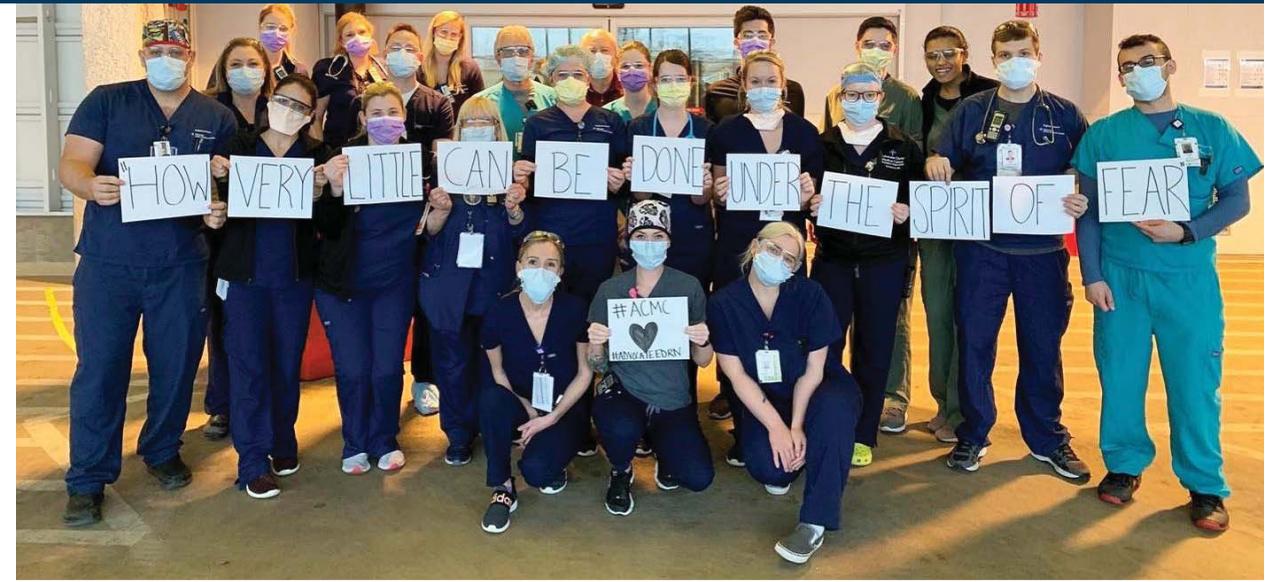
“There were many unknowns this year, but we knew one thing for sure – we were going to find a way to come through for the kids and their families,” said Jeff Goworowski, firefighter and public relations director for the Oak Lawn Professional Firefighters Union Local 3405.



Our team members and patients are thankful for YOU

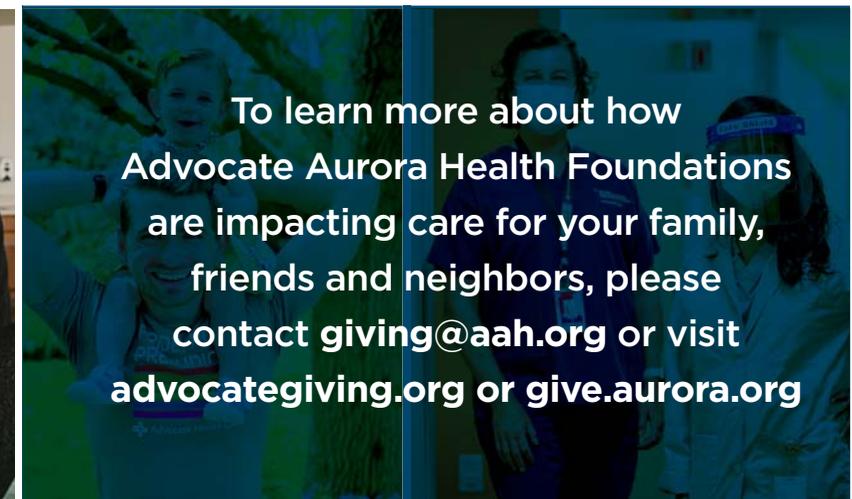
“ I want to send a sincere thank you to all who graciously donated to our organization. The food, masks and many other items helped to keep our staff motivated and engaged. They have continued to do a great job serving our community and we could not have done it without your support. Thank you. ”

- Rich Heim, PSA President, South Chicagoland President, Advocate Christ Medical Center



“ The food is very much appreciated and is a mood elevator. But the message that comes with that donation is really what matters, that the community really cares about the health care team. That is very meaningful to us all. ”

- Dawn Moeller, Manager Clinical Emergency Room, Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital



“ I just want to say thank you to all the people who donated. You aren't even aware of the impact you've made in other peoples' lives. ”

- Maria, Team Member Crisis Fund Recipient



“ I would like to sincerely thank all of you who have donated to our hospital these past few months to help sustain our dedicated and talented team members through this pandemic. Your generosity and thoughtfulness have touched us all. We are all truly better together. We continue to work hard every day to provide high quality health care services to our community and we are ever grateful to be of service. ”

- Ed Harding, President, Aurora Medical Center - Bay Area





We are  AdvocateAuroraHealth



We are  AdvocateAuroraHealth

Celebrating 5 Years!

Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services Giving Circle

Standing with Survivors

The Giving Circle is unique – The Giving Circle began with a question in the summer of 2016 – what if a group of 10 champions founded a circle of support for Aurora’s abuse response programs? The answer was swift: the Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services Giving Circle held its kickoff on November 3, 2016 with 10 Founders and 11 Charter Members. They agreed that members would donate \$1,000 each year, pool their gifts and come together to allocate funds annually, beginning in 2017, to support projects suggested by abuse response program leaders.

This year we celebrate their 5th annual allocation.

The Giving Circle is successful – Since 2017, the Giving Circle has allocated more than \$153,000 to support a wide array of projects that help survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

The Giving Circle is diverse – The Giving Circle brings together people who are passionate about helping survivors and celebrating their strengths. Members are of all ages, racial backgrounds, genders and sexual orientations, and are survivors and allies.



Photos left to right: Top Row: Thrive Honoree Anya Gordon with David Caruso; Michael Gielow, Katie Wilke, Renee Johnson, Jean-Marie Poindexter; Cristy Garcia-Thomas; Nick and Kathy Turkal; Bottom Row: Shawn Hittman and Herica Silva, Thrive Honorees; Zoom Meeting; Renee Johnson and Ruth Gosse

Giving Circle support by the numbers

The Giving Circle has allocated **\$153,750** since 2017.



\$37,550 to **Safe Mom Safe Baby** to provide counseling, basic needs and safe housing for pregnant and new moms experiencing domestic violence



\$32,340 for **Healing Services** for survivors receiving short and long term healing therapy



\$49,360 for **Crisis Care** for victims receiving emergency medical care including clothing, transportation and equipment to improve patient experience



\$14,000 for **24/7 Hotline and Text Line** awareness campaigns, improved access and victim privacy



\$13,500 to **Care for the AHAS Caregivers** including stress reduction, self care and education



\$7,000 to the **Milwaukee Sexual Assault Review** collaboration of law enforcement, criminal justice and health care partners

HOPE SHINING BLUE

A Denim Day celebration honoring survivors of sexual and domestic violence

Since 2014, **Giving Circle members have personally donated more than \$111,000** to support Hope Shining Blue through tickets, tables and fundraising at the event, and helped solicit sponsorships totaling more than \$39,000.

Healing is a journey. The Giving Circle paves the way.

Lighting the Path

“Survivors of sexual violence often suffer from long term effects to their mental and physical health. There are very few spaces where male survivors can share their feelings with each other and know that they are not alone. The Healing Center’s Male Survivor Retreat truly helps them heal.”

- Aaron Evans
Trauma Therapist



In 2018, the Aurora Healing Center hosted a two-day Male Survivor Retreat, the first event of its kind in Wisconsin, and survivors from Wisconsin, Illinois and Texas found it to be powerful and healing. The Giving Circle allocated full funding for the event in October 2019 and again the men asked for it to return in the future. The Giving Circle generously continued its support and, after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the retreat will return next year.

The facilitators are Aaron Evans and Mike Lew, a nationally known psychotherapist who has facilitated similar retreats for 30 years and has helped thousands of men heal from the effects of childhood sexual abuse, rape, physical violence, emotional abuse and neglect.

Through physical activities, music, writing exercises and group small group discussion, the men will explore together the impact of their abuse and find creative outlets to release their anger and shame in a safe place to share feelings.

The retreat will return in Fall 2022 at Friends Meeting House, a warm and welcoming facility surrounded by woods and walking paths in Milwaukee’s Riverwest neighborhood. Thanks to the Giving Circle, there is no cost for survivors to attend beyond their travel expenses.

The Giving Circle has allocated more than \$32,000 to support healing services like the Male Retreat for survivors receiving healing therapy.

“Another question I am frequently asked is, “What do you mean by recovery?” It has taken me a while to answer that one. I had been depending on other people’s definitions of recovery until I developed one that worked for me – just as you must come to one that makes sense for you. Mine is simple. For me, it is about freedom.

Recovery is the freedom to make choices in your life that aren’t determined by the abuse. The specific choices will be different for each of you. The freedom to choose is your birthright.”

- Mike Lew, *Victims No Longer*

Healing is a journey. The Giving Circle paves the way.

Bridges to Safety and Self-Sufficiency

The Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services Safe Mom Safe Baby program supports pregnant women and new moms whose lives have been upended by domestic violence. Pregnant survivors of domestic/intimate partner violence are referred to Safe Mom Safe Baby and paired with a nurse case manager who makes sure they receive comprehensive services that lead to a healthy birth and a safer life. The program provides access to prenatal and postpartum care, advocacy, trauma-informed counseling, coordination with community resources, parenting and financial education and safe housing through the Safe Home Environment (SHE) program that provides subsidized and safe housing at St. Catherine Residence for women and their children who have no other safe place to live. The SHE program was launched by our Centennial Partnership with the Junior League of Milwaukee.

Since 2017, the Giving Circle has allocated \$37,500 to support Safe Mom Safe Baby projects including décor and items for the St. Catherine's common area and cribs for the moms living there, support to sustain the nurse case manager position and bridge funding in 2022 as the Junior League of Milwaukee five-year partnership sunsets.

This support changes lives!

At five months pregnant, Alexandra found herself homeless and in an abusive relationship with nowhere to turn.

“At one point, I was sleeping in my truck. My child’s father threatened to kill me numerous times. I feared for my life as well as my unborn child’s,” she shared. “I was on the verge of giving up.”

Then Alexandra’s doctor referred her to the Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services Safe Mom Safe Baby program, which supports pregnant women and new moms whose lives have been affected by domestic violence. Through access to comprehensive care and community resources, the program improves the health and safety of the mother and her baby.

“I met with Andrea Grant, the nurse case manager, and shared my story. Andrea signed me up for the Safe Home Environment (SHE) program, which provided a safe place for

me to live,” said Alexandra. “It alleviated a lot of worry and stress that allowed me to focus on my pregnancy. It gave me the new start I needed during an extremely difficult time in my life.”

The support didn’t stop there. “I was introduced to another amazing woman. Shirley Combs provided the love and guidance that I lacked in my life. She inspired me to create a better life for myself and baby.”

Shirley is a Healing Volunteer Coordinator. Part of her role is working with mothers on goal setting and lifestyle changes.

“I also coordinate monthly room visits to ensure both mom and baby have safe living conditions,” explained Shirley. “And I work



to create a culture of mutual respect while building healthy relationships.”

Together with Andrea, the nurse case manager, they ensure moms and babies are connected to medical care. “In addition, we promote safe sleeping habits by providing each mom with a pack ‘n play for their children,” shared Shirley.

Alexandra’s son, Elliot, was born on October 30, 2020. Both she and her son are doing well as he celebrates his first birthday.

“Thanks to the SHE program, Safe Mom Safe Baby and the awesome ladies at Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services, I’m on my way to becoming self-sufficient!” shared Alexandra.



Earlier this summer a new SHE mom was carrying her baby on her forearm and was reluctant to use the Hop streetcar or bus line, or even walk in nice weather because the baby in car seat was too heavy to carry. She was missing her follow up in person WIC appointments and trying to buy formula outside of the valuable supplemental program. She had even missed her last Wisconsin Works in person appointment that linked her to food share benefits. Thanks to a Giving Circle allocation, she received a new stroller and has been able to easily attend her appointments with a new set of wheels and bonus storage space. Baby Elijah was over the top excited to be headed out on his first adventure in his new stroller!

Signposts along the way

One of the projects enabled by the Giving Circle is much needed community outreach for the Hotline and the recent addition of a Text Line to help survivors communicate privately. In 2017, the group allocated \$4,000 in seed money for an awareness campaign to promote the hotline that supports survivors 24/7, no matter where they live. The Giving Circle allocation inspired guests at the 2018 Hope Shining Blue event to contribute another \$26,000 to help spread the word.



The ads appeared on social media and in signage placed later that year in bars, restaurants and bus shelters throughout

Milwaukee. Since then, posters created by this campaign have been placed in public spaces each year.



This year, a Giving Circle \$10,000 allocation updated these posters to include the text line number and supported the printing of yard signs that are being placed in the community by Giving Circle members and volunteers this fall.

“This will enable more people who experience sexual and domestic violence to know that they are not alone,” said Nicky Glaser, manager of Volunteer & Advocacy Services. “No matter what. No matter when. Help is here and it really is just a phone call or text away.”

Hear what inspires Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services Giving Circle members

“ I am a survivor and proud to be a part of the Giving Circle. This circle has supported me in using my voice and making an impact so that survivors know they are not alone. ”

- Candace Sanchez



“ My original involvement was attending Hope Shining Blue to support a cause close to a friend's heart. What I didn't realize was how much of an impact the event would have on me, and how much it moved me to hear the stories of so many individuals already facing adversity, only to experience domestic and sexual violence on top of that. To see their growth since their trauma, the support and care that was provided them and the confidence and smiles on their faces really made me feel like I could help have a positive impact on an individual's life. ”

- Andrew Janeczek



“ After my first Hope Shining Blue event, I was impressed hearing the survivor stories and what Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services has done to help them. I want to make myself aware of what services are available and aware of who we can help. ”

- Nancy Jacobs



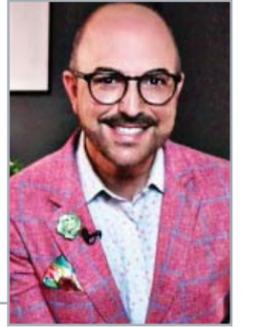
“ I am inspired by the courage of survivors and the caregivers who make it all happen! ”

- Renee Johnson



“ The care givers, counselors, foundation leaders and survivors inspire me. I've seen first hand how our contributions on behalf of the Giving Circle change lives - in small ways and in big ways. ”

- David Caruso



“ I was 28, a single mom of 2 kids under the age of 2 and found myself in a situation where I didn't know who to turn to for help. My two girls were the victims of abuse and after making it through our experience, my daughters and I pledged to help others. The Giving Circle provides us a community in which to do that. I'm so proud that the programs we fund help advocate for change and support the 24/7 Crisis Hotline and Text Line. I know there are moms who don't have to feel like I felt because Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services is here to help them. ”

- Jean-Marie Poindexter



“ I believe we are here to serve others and this is one way for me to serve that I feel really makes a difference in the lives of others. ”

- Cheryl Hill



In Loving Memory of Mark Natzke

“ I enjoy giving back and understand the critical need for funding to help survivors of abuse get started on their healing journey. ”

- Mark Natzke (in memoriam, 1968 - 2021)



Celebrating five years of impact!



A group of members gathered for a photo in 2018. Left to right, standing: Cheryl Hill, Renee Johnson, Rachel Peete, Jean-Marie Poindexter, Melissa Goins, Mark Natzke, Marquette Baylor, Meg Grogan, Candace Sanchez; seated: Maureen Schuerman, Kathy Turkal, Michelle Zapinski, Shawn Hittman, Sally Turner, Herica Silva.

Thank you to all our Giving Circle members over the last five years

Marquette Baylor	Linda Haag	Laura & Stephen Kollatz	Herica Silva ^
Annette Blanchard ^	Lindsay Hammerer	Chrissy Kruger-Gruendyke	Cristy Garcia-Thomas *
David Caruso *	Gail Hanson	Adrienne Lovett	Raechell Thuot & Craig Williams ^
Emma Chaves	Cheryl Hill ^	Tracy Milkowski ^	Jeff Tjugum
Tom Cooper ^	Satchidanand Hiremath	Mark Natzke ^ +	Kathy Turkal *
Linda Davis *	Shawn Hittman *	Lindsay Olson	Sally Turner ^
Chris Doerfler ^	Monica Hocum	Katie Ott	Markley Ward
Susan Dwyer	Mark Huber *	Rachel Peete ^	Katie Wilke ^
Mike Gielow	Nancy Jacobs	Jean-Marie Poindexter ^	Leslie Winger *
Melissa Goins	Andrew Janeczek	Mindy Lubar Price *	Allen & Alena Witkowski
Anya Gordon	Renee Johnson *	Candace Sanchez	Michelle & Michael Zapinski
Ruth Gosse	Jill Kahabka	Chris Schindler	Stacey Zysk
Trent & Jackie Graham ^	Eric Kase ^	Maureen Schuerman *	
Meg Grogan	Vivian King		

*Founder ^ Charter + Deceased

To learn more about Aurora Healing & Advocacy Services and the Giving Circle, visit aurorahealthcare.org/healing-advocacy-services or contact Sarah Katsandonis at sarah.katsandonis@aah.org.

Bank of America Chicago Marathon Team Advocate Impact



Thank you for making a difference

With your gift in support of a Team Advocate marathoner, you're not only supporting your friends or family, you're supporting cancer research, helping children and adults with Down Syndrome, giving back to nurses and physicians who save lives each day and more. Through your generosity, you're ensuring that more than one million people have access to world-class care close to home.



In 2021, with the help of supporters like you, more than **\$90,000** has been raised by marathon participants to **support Advocate Health Care Charitable Foundation**



More than **\$1 million** has been raised by marathon participants **since the program launched in 2011**



1,500 donors through the **marathon program in 2021**



Top funds

supported through the marathon program:

1. Pediatric Oncology
2. Child Life Development
3. Advocate Heart Institute
4. Childhood Trauma Treatment Program
5. Mental Health Services

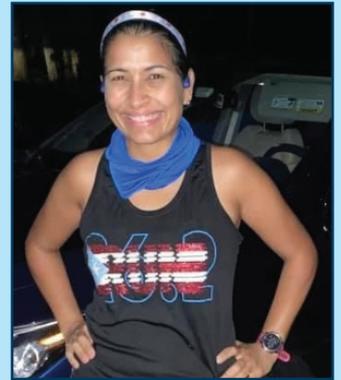
To learn more about how Advocate Charitable Foundation is impacting care for your family, friends and neighbors, please visit advocategiving.org.

Those you've helped cross the finish line

Running for her patients

Melissa Nater, MD, went from not running at all, to now — about to run her second marathon. Dr. Nater is a pediatric cardiac ICU physician at Advocate Children's Hospital in Oak Lawn, IL. She joined Team Advocate to run the Chicago Marathon and raise support for her favorite and most inspiring health fund, which is the one that supports her patients, Advocate Children's Heart Institute.

“I see so many miracles at work. It fills my heart, the things these families go through,” Dr. Nater says. “My patients are my true heroes. They have endured, in a short time, more than most of us endure in a lifetime. And through surgeries, procedures, lines and tubes, they overcome and smile, play and succeed.”



“I remember doing my first 9-mile race and I didn't think I could finish. My running partner said, 'Think about your patients and dedicate a mile to each one.' So, I said, 'This one's for Kenny. This one's for London.' I thought of patients that have come through so much and it was totally inspiring,” Dr. Nater said.

Running for children with special needs

Dr. Justin Welke, DDS, Board Certified Pediatric Dentist, started running as a way to stay in shape, enjoy the outdoors and spend time with his fiancé. But after running the 2019 Chicago Marathon and seeing a friend be a part of Team Advocate, he decided to join the team. As a Board Certified Pediatric Dentist working with children with special needs, he sees firsthand the difference the Foundation helps make for these patients, so he chose to support the Adult Down Syndrome Center to help support these efforts. Dr. Welke plans to be a Chicago Marathoner as long as he can, continuing to build on the fundraising support he's received each year with the help of his family and friends.



“There are families out there with special needs children that truly need resources that are sometimes out of their budget. The parents of these children are some of the most generous, kind and loving people I have ever met - and they sacrifice so much for the needs of their child. I'm fortunate to have the physical ability to run this race and use it as a platform to raise funds and rally support for a population in need.”

Running for her daughter

Anyone who knows Caitlin Olejnik knows she is very passionate about two things: her family and running. Running the Chicago Marathon with Team Advocate allows her to combine both her love for her family and love for running into one amazing day.

Along with knowing what she's passionate about, anyone who knows Caitlin knows that her daughter, Loralai, has Williams Syndrome. Williams Syndrome is a genetic condition that is present at birth and is characterized by medical complications including cardiovascular disease, development delays and learning challenges. Caitlin's family is eternally grateful for the continued care, compassion and help Loralai receives from the doctors, nurses and staff who help care for Loralai within the Advocate Health Care System.



Having a child with an incredibly rare condition can be difficult to navigate to begin with, but when you have doctors that treat her so incredibly well, are knowledgeable in many areas and who are able and willing to communicate with one another and with you, it is such a blessing. I couldn't ask for a better group of health care workers to care for my kids.





Welcome to Visionaries in Health

A letter from the president

Thank you for your generous support of Advocate Aurora Health's programs and services through your recent gift to Aurora Health Care Foundation. Philanthropic gifts like yours are essential for our future, helping us to transform the way care is delivered, tackle health disparities and embrace radically new ideas. **With your cumulative donation(s) of \$1,000 or more this year, we proudly recognize you as one of our most loyal and generous donors and a Visionary in Health (formerly known as President's Society in Illinois and Infinity Society in Wisconsin).**

As a gesture of our gratitude and to welcome you as a Visionary in Health, we've enclosed a collection of special notecards. These notecards feature artwork created by patients through programs supported by donors like you. We hope you'll share them, along with the meaningful stories you've helped impact, with those who are special to you.

In the coming weeks, a member of the Foundation team will be sharing the opportunities available to you as a Visionary in Health. However, in the meantime should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to your local Foundation team (*contact card enclosed*). They would be glad to hear from you.

At Advocate Aurora Health, our mission is to help people live well. With your gift, you have joined us in this critical mission, and for that we are so grateful. Welcome again, as a Visionary in Health of Aurora Health Care Foundation.

Sincerely,

Randy Varju, FAHP, CFRE
President, Advocate Aurora Health Foundations
Chief Development Officer, Advocate Aurora Health





Aurora Health Care Foundation Visionaries in Health

At Advocate Aurora Health, philanthropy has and will continue to be pivotal in our ability to provide high-quality health to all of our patients – today and in the future.

As a Visionary in Health, you are helping us transform the way care is delivered, tackle health disparities and embrace radically new ideas for wellness. Your generosity empowers us to bring the vision of helping people live well to life.

Your giving makes an impact



ALWAYS ADVANCING

Philanthropic support enables us to achieve top health outcomes and safety by securing the most advanced equipment and technology, including telehealth resources, simulation training, precision medicine and more. Gifts can also help us treat the whole person—mind, body and spirit—through support and wellness programs, behavioral health services and effective pain management.



CARING FOR YOU WITH YOU

Philanthropic support will help us address the complex factors that impact health beyond what is diagnosed in a medical setting or written on a prescription pad. Factors ranging from job and housing security to having access to healthy food and transportation play a critical role in overall health outcomes and total cost of care.



PIONEERING HEALTH

With philanthropic support, we will develop new care models that use a combination of community outreach, and culturally-sensitive, advanced clinical services and research to reduce health disparities and respond to unique patient needs. The spirit of innovation and discovery at the heart of Advocate Aurora Health will guide every step and propel us forward as a national health care leader.

In 2020

842
Visionaries
in Health

More than
\$10.5 million
donated by Visionaries in Health

464
funds
supported

2022 Impact Report

YOUR SUPPORT CHANGES LIVES



YOUR SUPPORT CHANGES LIVES — IMPACT REPORT 2022

Your support of Kessler Foundation helps people with disabilities maximize recovery, independence, and inclusion. Each day, Kessler Foundation researchers and grantmakers change lives, thanks to you.

Inside our Impact Report 2022, you'll find highlights of what you have made possible and stories of those whose lives you've changed. Your support enables our scientists to research groundbreaking rehabilitation interventions and helps our grantmakers create pathways to employment and independence. Your support changes lives.

With gratitude,



Rodger DeRose
President and CEO



Rodger DeRose and Michele Pignatello



Michele Pignatello
Vice President and Chief Development Officer

You support. You heal. You inspire.
YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
Your generosity helps people with disabilities maximize recovery, independence, and inclusion.
Your support changes lives.
YOU CHANGE LIVES.
THANK YOU! 

Kenny Diamond passed away after living for more than two years with widespread cancer and paralysis caused by a spinal cord tumor.



Amanda Botticello, PhD, MPH, seeks the best ways to care for infants with neonatal abstinence syndrome.



Peii (Peggy) Chen, PhD, is developing home-based treatment for spatial neglect using the latest virtual reality technology.

Carla Basante participates in research to evaluate the impact of exercise on cognition and mobility for people living with MS.



Brian Sandroff, PhD and Ghaith Androwis, PhD, pool their expertise to find new ways to help people with MS maintain mobility, balance, and cognitive function.



Steve Ascolese participates in research to retrain the brain and correct spatial neglect after stroke.



Denise Krch, PhD, and Nancy Chiaravalloti, PhD, will use a new onsite laboratory to draw blood samples to determine new treatments.

William participates in a unique study to help teenagers and young adults living with autism spectrum disorder prepare for job interviews.



YOUR SUPPORT RAISES EXPECTATIONS FOR RECOVERY AFTER SPINAL CORD INJURY

It is remarkable what the human body can achieve with access to groundbreaking research and the latest technology. At the Tim and Caroline Reynolds Center for Spinal Stimulation, Kessler Foundation researchers led by Gail F. Forrest, PhD, director, and Steven Kirshblum, MD, co-director, are harnessing the power of electrical stimulation to help restore function lost after spinal cord injury. By combining stimulation with intensive therapy, they are seeing dramatic gains, even among people living with spinal cord injury for many years.

Drs. Forrest and Kirshblum agree that your support has been critical to these advances. “With the help of the Reynolds family and many other donors, we have been able to expand our clinical research to enroll more individuals with spinal cord injury in our experimental studies and share our progress with the scientific community,” explains Dr. Forrest.

People living with spinal cord injury in northern New Jersey have access to the Reynolds Center’s innovative research studies. For others, participating in this research means traveling far from home. Thanks to the generosity of the Diamond Family in establishing the Kenny Diamond Memorial Fund, there is help for those who need temporary housing near Kessler Foundation while they participate in months-long studies.

At the Reynolds Center today, studies in spinal stimulation are translating into substantial improvements in function for individuals

paralyzed by spinal cord injury, according to Dr. Forrest, a leader in the exploration of transcutaneous stimulation. For this approach, the stimulator is applied on the skin overlying the area of injury. While the stimulator is activated, the person can stand and walk. “Some individuals are able to move their limbs on their own after the stimulator is turned off—an exciting finding with tremendous implications for people living with spinal cord injury,” she predicts. Stimulation can also improve trunk control and balance. “Being able to sit more comfortably for longer periods enhances wheelchair mobility and expands their ability to exercise and participate in therapy,” adds Dr. Forrest.

Transcutaneous stimulation is restoring function to arms and hands, too. Increases in grip strength translate to greater independence in self-care and wheeled mobility, as well as other meaningful activities. “One participant delights in being able to throw a ball to his



Gail Forrest, PhD

child,” notes Dr. Forrest, “and another relishes playing his piano again.”

While gaining voluntary control over paralyzed or weakened limbs is a major focus of the Reynolds Center team, researchers are seeing improvements in other ways that are less well known. After spinal cord injury, many individuals lose control of their bladder and bowel, and their bodies are less able to respond to changes in blood pressure and temperature. “We are finding that stimulation improves some of these functions that are so important in daily life,” says Dr. Forrest, “which has tremendous implications for the future of people with spinal cord injury and their caregivers.”

This year, the Reynolds Center team expands its research to include epidural spinal stimulation, which involves surgically implanting a neurostimulator directly over the injured spinal cord. The procedure, developed at the University of Louisville, will be performed by neurosurgeon Robert Heary, MD, medical director of the Spine Program at Mountainside Medical Center in Mountainside, NJ.

Drs. Forrest and Kirshblum anticipate rapid progress in epidural stimulation research thanks to a major advance in stimulation technology made possible in part by support from an anonymous Kessler Foundation donor. A collaborative effort of Medtronic, Kessler Foundation, and the University of Louisville brings a remarkable tool to the forefront of stimulation technology. The Medtronic Stim X, a handheld tablet-type controller with



Steven Kirshblum, MD

specialized capabilities to restore diverse kinds of function for individuals living with SCI. Participants implanted with epidural stimulators helped develop the new tablet, which gives them control over their own stimulation therapy. The Medtronic Stim X also records how participants use stimulation outside the clinical trial, providing researchers with valuable data about how individuals use epidural stimulation in their daily lives.

“Using this one controller, individuals can direct stimulation to move their limbs, empty their bladder, and control their blood pressure and breathing,” explains Dr. Forrest. “And because the tablet can be used with limited hand function, they are gaining independence from family and caregivers.” Dr. Kirshblum adds, “The team is currently working on Stim X version 2, which promises even more functionality.”

The Reynolds Center will be the first facility on the East Coast to study both types of spinal stimulation. “By broadening the scope of our research in spinal stimulation, we will contribute to global efforts to revolutionize the outlook for people with spinal cord injury. With the continued support of our donors, we will transform the world’s longstanding view of spinal cord injury as an incurable condition,” concludes Dr. Kirshblum.

Diamond Family Supports People with SCI to Honor Their Late Son Kenny

The Kenny Diamond Memorial Fund to support research in spinal cord injury at Kessler Foundation was established by the Diamond family to honor their son Kenny who passed away after living for more than two years with widespread cancer and a spinal cord tumor. When Kenny's paralysis made it too difficult for his parents to care for him at home, Kenny was admitted to Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation, where he received exceptional care until he passed away.

"We are grateful for the care Kenny received. We created the memorial fund to support SCI research," says Dr. Martin Diamond, Kenny's father. "Research is pivotal to advance treatments, technologies and cures. We chose to support SCI research," Dr. Diamond explains, "because of Kenny's unique situation with spinal paralysis and to help advance rehabilitation research for all people living with SCI."

Proceeds from The Kenny Diamond Memorial Fund will be targeted to defray housing costs for those patients needing financial assistance to enable participation in spinal implantation research at Kessler Foundation's Tim and Carolyn Reynolds Center for Spinal Stimulation.

Kenny's younger brother, Jeff, adds, "A weight was lifted from my parents' shoulders when Kenny was admitted to Kessler Institute.

They knew he would receive expert care while adapting to life with paralysis. However, Kenny passed away after only six weeks in the hospital. We chose to establish the fund to support others who wish to participate in SCI research but lack the means to join an extensive study."

"Kenny had a big heart. He would be pleased about helping others with SCI," says Kenny's mom Shirley. "The Kenny Diamond Memorial Fund is a way to share a piece of Kenny's heart and for his family to show their gratitude.



Jeff Diamond, Kenny Diamond holding his young niece, and Dr. Martin Diamond.



Learn more about The Kenny Diamond Memorial Fund.

YOUR SUPPORT ADVANCES EXPLORATIONS OF BRAIN NEUROPLASTICITY

Historically, it was believed that the brain stopped growing after childhood. We now know the contrary to be true. Neuroscience has confirmed that our brains change throughout our lives, from birth to death. The brain's ability to rewire its circuitry and make adaptive changes, known as neuroplasticity, is why recovery after injury is possible.

But much about neuroplasticity is not well understood. Thanks to your support, Kessler Foundation researchers are asking questions and pursuing answers. Using the functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and real-time neurofeedback capabilities of the Rocco Ortenzio Neuroimaging Center, they are conducting several novel pilot studies. Funded by the David F. Bolger Trust, these studies will help researchers understand how and where adaptations take place in the brain and correlate such changes to shifts in behavior and function.

Identifying a Biomarker for Fatigue

Individuals who have sustained traumatic brain injury or stroke frequently rate fatigue to be their most troubling symptom, imposing limits on their ability to care for themselves, reengage with friends and family, and return to work.

Glenn Wylie, DPhil, director of the Ortenzio Center, and Olga Boukrina, PhD, senior research scientist in the Center for Stroke Rehabilitation Research at Kessler Foundation, are examining a biomarker for fatigue in people

with stroke. "Sometimes after stroke people feel much more fatigued, and this dramatically increases their subjective experience of effort when performing mental tasks, which in turn affects their ability to participate in rehabilitation," says Dr. Boukrina. "We want to understand how fatigue is expressed in the brain," she adds.

"Our prior research shows that the basal ganglia plays a significant role in fatigue," explains Dr. Wylie. "This is a part of the brain where stroke damage can have significant effects on muscle control, vision, sense of touch, perception, and judgment," he adds.



Olga Boukrina, PhD, Jeanne Zanca, MPT, PhD, and Glenn Wylie, DPhil

To learn if there is a correlation between fatigue and the basal ganglia, the team is inducing fatigue in three groups—individuals with stroke with direct damage to the basal ganglia, individuals with stroke elsewhere in the brain, and individuals who have not experienced stroke.

“This study will allow us to identify the network of brain areas associated with fatigue. With this understanding, we then can turn to the important work of alleviating fatigue,” concludes Dr. Boukrina.

Understanding Fatigue Across the Lifecycle

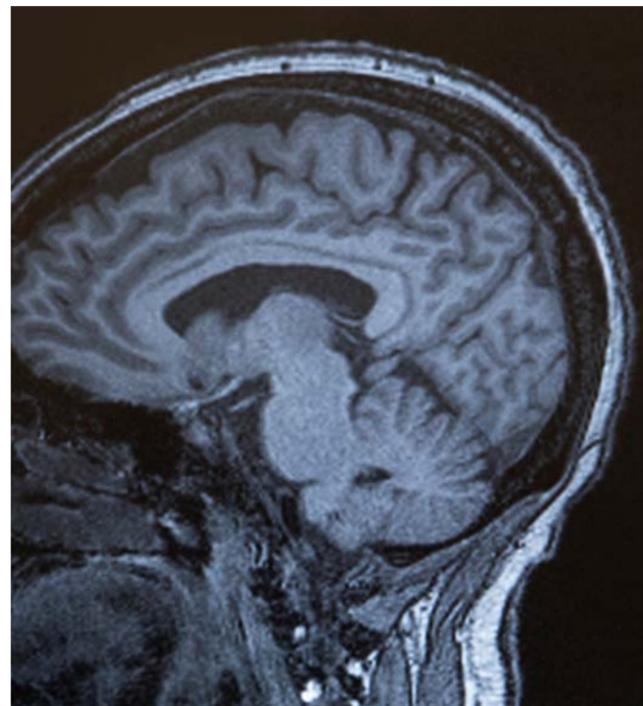
Dr. Wylie is conducting another pilot study of cognitive fatigue—in older adults. While it may seem intuitive to assume that fatigue worsens with age, initial study data suggest otherwise. His team is examining both state fatigue—in the moment—and trait fatigue—over an extended period—across different ages. Data collected so far show older individuals report comparable levels of fatigue over a longer period (e.g., two weeks), but experience less fatigue accomplishing immediate tasks. The initial data show the opposite to be true with younger participants who become more fatigued doing immediate tasks. Dr. Wylie and his team are now testing a sample of individuals over 65 years old to see if this same pattern is maintained as age increases.

“Investigating fatigue across the lifespan represents a unique window into the differences among all age groups,” says Dr. Wylie. “Understanding how state and trait fatigue change over the lifecycle is a critical first step towards developing appropriate interventions for each group,” he adds.

Using Neurofeedback to Promote Beneficial Brain Plasticity

In another pilot study, Dr. Boukrina is examining the use of an innovative technique called real-time fMRI neurofeedback to help stroke survivors overcome persistent reading and language deficits. This technology is applied to improve cerebral blood flow and neural activity in the left hemisphere of the brain. The left hemisphere is critical for the ability to speak, read, and write.

“Studies have shown that repeated efforts to self-regulate brain activity lead to learning-induced neural changes,” Dr. Boukrina explains. With real-time fMRI and neurofeedback, participants learn to regulate their own brain activity by combining mental strategies with neurofeedback. While in the MRI scanner, they can see the changes taking place in their brain as they read, respond to verbal prompts, and perform motor imagery—they imagine moving their right hand to help activate the left side of the brain.



The brain's ability to rewire its circuitry and make adaptive changes, known as neuroplasticity, is why recovery after injury is possible.



Drs. Boukrina, Wylie, and Zanca explore neuroplasticity, thanks to your support.

Similarly, Jeanne Zanca, MPT, PhD, senior research scientist in the Center for Spinal Cord Injury Research, is piloting a study aimed at empowering people with spinal cord injury to self-regulate chronic neuropathic pain using neurofeedback. Neuropathic pain is a common complication of spinal cord injury that limits many aspects of functioning, including mobility, cognition, sleep, relationships, employment, and community engagement.

Current approaches to neuropathic pain treatment—typically medication and surgery—often come with unwanted side effects. And while these options can chip away at the pain, they can't eradicate it completely. People with spinal cord injury need options to manage their remaining pain and reduce its interference with daily life.

By comparing the brain activity of people with spinal cord injury to that of their uninjured peers, Dr. Zanca seeks to identify the specific network of brain areas that contribute to the pain experience and to provide feedback

to help individuals self-regulate their pain. “While in the MRI scanner, participants are guided to identify their own best pain-minimizing strategies—focused breathing, picturing themselves in a favorite location—and neurofeedback lets them know if they are succeeding,” Dr. Zanca explains.

“Neurofeedback empowers individuals to find the best strategies to alleviate their chronic pain. It gives them control,” she concludes.



Listen to Drs. Boukrina, Wylie, and Zanca discuss the correlations of changes in the brain to changes in behavior and function.

YOUR SUPPORT PREPARES ADOLESCENTS WITH AUTISM FOR THE WORKFORCE USING POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

We all remember these moments—our first job, our first time living away from our parents, our first paycheck. The transition from adolescence to young adulthood is a difficult but critical time. For youth on the autism spectrum this time is even more challenging. An abundance of research indicates that they are more likely than their peers to experience low self-esteem, lack of confidence, and low motivation. Historically, interventions for kids on the spectrum have been deficit-based—focused on fixing what is deficient—or wrong—in a person. Across a lifetime, an individual with autism is told repeatedly what they should not do and cannot do.

Thanks to your support, Helen M. Genova, PhD, associate director of Kessler Foundation’s Center for Autism Research, is developing and testing innovative solutions to help adolescents on the autism spectrum improve awareness of their own personal strengths and their ability to advocate for themselves across multiple contexts—school, relationships, job interviews, and employment. Dr. Genova’s approach is based in positive psychology—focused on improving wellness by cultivating strengths, as opposed to fixing weaknesses. “Evidence-based tools that take this approach in autism are not in common use. With your support, my team and I are working to change this,” says Dr. Genova.



Helen M. Genova, PhD, is developing innovative solutions to help adolescents on the autism spectrum improve awareness of their own personal strengths.

“Dr. Genova’s approach is based in positive psychology—focused on improving wellness by cultivating strengths, as opposed to fixing weaknesses.”

For youth on the autism spectrum, a big challenge is getting and maintaining employment. Your support enabled Dr. Genova and her team to first develop and evaluate a positive psychology intervention, *KF-STRIDE Into the Interview!*, a web-based tool to improve job interview skills by teaching youth on the spectrum about their strengths and how to convey them to future employers. Dr. Genova has found *KF-STRIDE Into the Interview!* to be effective in improving interview skills and strength identification. Plus, the kids who’ve participated have reported that it was enjoyable and helpful.

Now, with a new grant from the Alfiero and Lucia Palestroni Foundation, Dr. Genova is developing and testing an app to complement *KF-STRIDE Into the Interview!* The app will prompt users to record how they used their strengths on a daily basis, helping to build on what they’ve learned and use it in daily life.

Once they’ve obtained a position, individuals on the autism spectrum can have significant difficulty maintaining a job and communicating with colleagues. With new support from the Dean Janeway Endowment Fund at the New Jersey Health Foundation, Wakefern Food Corporation, and two anonymous donors, Dr. Genova is also developing and testing *KF-STRIDE Into Work!* This new intervention will assist young adults with autism identify their job-applicable assets and talents to enhance work satisfaction, productivity, and well-being. *KF-STRIDE Into Work!* will teach individuals strength-based strategies to apply when stressed, frustrated, or overwhelmed.

“Many employment interventions teach the same skills to everyone, even though autism is a spectrum and people with autism have different abilities and skills,” says Dr. Genova, adding, “Our interventions take an individualized approach based on the unique strengths of each person.”

“The support of our donors has been critical in helping us move these promising programs forward. Because of you, the future for people on the spectrum looks brighter. We are expanding our work using the latest technology to offer a wide range of training for transition-age youth so they can maximize their independence and inclusion,” says Dr. Genova.

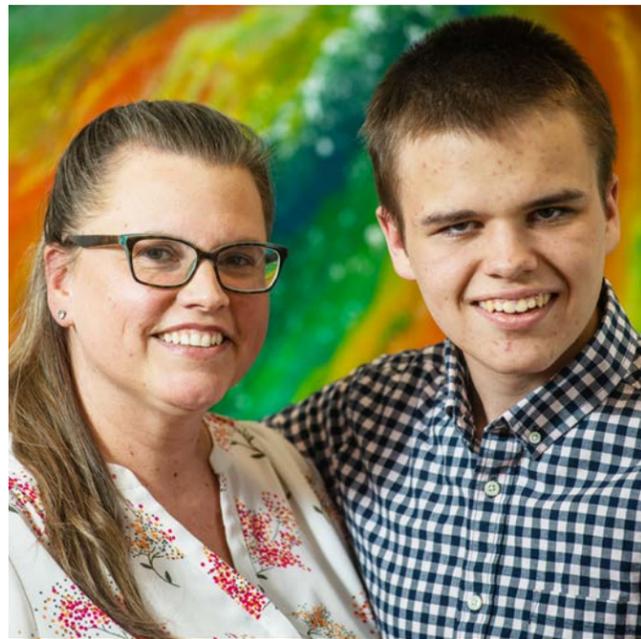


William Kendis practices his interview skills with Dr. Genova.

William Lands a Summer Job

Potential employers often ask, “Why are you the right person for the job?” Practice and skill are needed to effectively communicate the best answer, especially if you live with autism like William Kendis.

William, who is 17 years old, participated in a unique 10-session online interview skills enhancement program being tested by Dr. Helen Genova and her team. The program helps teenagers and young adults on the spectrum identify their personal strengths and communicate them to potential employers.



William Kendis (right) and his mother, Lori Kendis (left).

“I think it’s difficult for any young person to articulate their skills and strengths in a job interview,” says Lori Kendis, William’s mom. “For people with autism, anxiety about social interaction adds an extra layer of challenge to an already stressful situation,” she explains.

Lori and William learned about Dr. Genova’s research and they got involved. “I liked the online interview training sessions,” says William of the first study he joined. “There was an animated interviewer, so I wasn’t too nervous. Later, a real person helped me practice in pretend interviews—that was harder.”

As William joined additional studies, Lori saw growth in her son’s confidence. “Participating helped him identify his personality strengths. Creativity was one, which wasn’t a surprise since he loves to draw,” says Lori. “He then practiced communicating his strengths in mock interviews. Over time, I heard his confidence increase. I’m proud of him. His news skills already helped him get a summer job at our town pool,” adds Lori.

William says he’s grateful for Dr. Genova and her team. I also want to thank Kessler Foundation donors. I know you help make all this happen. One day, I’ll interview for my first dream job. Thanks to you, I have a better chance at getting it!”



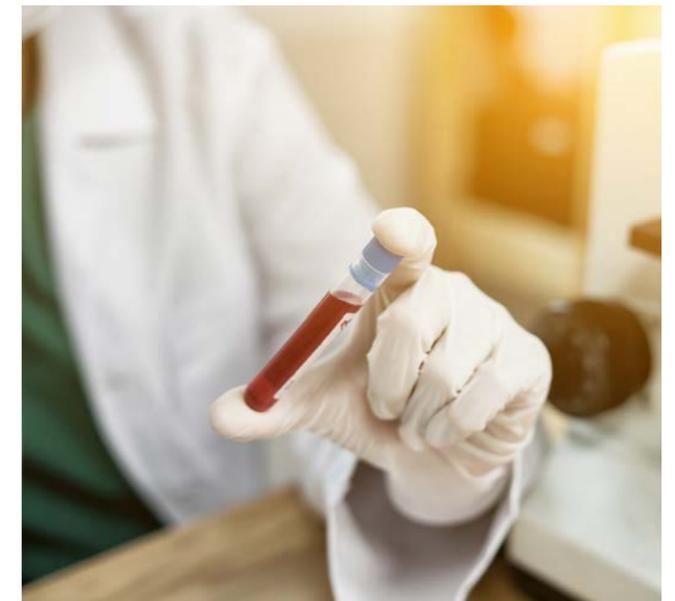
Listen to a special message from William and Lori Kendis.

YOUR SUPPORT CHARTS OPTIMAL PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE USING BLOOD BIOMARKERS

Will I get better? When? How? All individuals faced with rehabilitation for disabling illnesses or injuries ask the same questions. Answering these questions has been a challenge for rehabilitation professionals who have had little scientific data to rely on for predicting recovery for individuals and charting their optimal pathways to independence.

Thanks to your support, these challenges will be overcome as blood-based biomarkers are incorporated in Kessler Foundation research. A new onsite laboratory for drawing blood samples, funded by a generous donation from Foundation Trustee Terri Goldberg and her husband, Michael, is enhancing the Foundation’s research capabilities and accelerating the development of new treatments.

Biomarkers are measurable indicators of some biological state or condition that can indicate disease level or reflect future responsiveness to treatment. They may be imaging findings, behavioral or physiological changes, or substances detected in blood, saliva, and body tissues. Blood-based biomarkers, in particular, are playing an increasingly important role in research related to neurological illness and injuries.



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“A generous donation from Foundation Trustee Terri Goldberg and her husband, Michael, is enhancing the Foundation’s research capabilities.”

The first study to utilize the new laboratory is led by Denise Krch, PhD, senior research scientist in the Center for Traumatic Brain Injury Research. This multi-site federally funded study* employs a unique holistic approach to improving the lives of people with traumatic brain injury and dementia and their caregivers. Researchers will use the new lab to draw blood to assess biomarkers present in moderate-to-severe traumatic brain injury, adding an important dimension to this study. “These biomarkers are strongly associated with the health-related quality of life for people with these disabling conditions,” Dr. Krch explains.



Denise Krch, PhD and Nancy Chiaravalloti, PhD, will use a new onsite laboratory to draw blood samples to determine new treatments.

As major causes of long-term disability and caregiver burden, traumatic brain injury and dementia are targets for the innovative intervention being studied. A 12-week group-based treatment teaches long-lasting management skills to each individual and their caregiver. “The new lab enables us to easily screen participants for blood-based biomarkers, adding a potential diagnostic tool to our existing research protocol,” she notes. “Identifying the biomarkers that correlate with treatment efficacy will help us determine the best way to implement this treatment approach,” she adds. “The unique design of this intervention and the broad scope of this trial have the potential to transform how we manage traumatic brain injury and dementia in the future.”

Known for their roles in diagnosing diseases and assessing health risks, biomarkers can also be useful for measuring responses to treatments. Identifying which individuals are likely to respond to an intervention is invaluable, according to Nancy Chiaravalloti, PhD, director of the Centers for Neuropsychology and Neuroscience Research, and Traumatic Brain Injury Research at Kessler Foundation. “Knowing in advance which treatments are likely to benefit each person will be a game-changer. Selecting the most beneficial treatment will streamline their rehabilitation and increase their likelihood for recovery,” she predicts. “Bringing new biomarkers into our research will provide the data we need to answer those important questions that every patient has.”

* U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Army Medical Research & Development Command, Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), Peer Reviewed Alzheimer’s Disease Research Program (PRARP) W81XWH-21-1-0743

Leader Mentors Next Generation



Nancy Chiaravalloti, PhD

“Mentoring promising new researchers is one of the best parts of my job,” says Dr. Chiaravalloti. “I aim to teach mentees the entire rehabilitation research process, from designing and leading studies to communicating findings to scientific and non-scientific audiences alike, so the impact of their research is felt by more people.”

Dr. Chiaravalloti, who has mentored the next generation of rehabilitation research for 18 years, says contributions from mentees lead to more innovative research at Kessler Foundation. “I guide these new researchers to the next level, but mentees help us too, by inspiring new research paths.”

With support from the Hearst Foundations, Dr. Chiaravalloti has mentored three Hearst Fellows. The first, Silvana Costa, PhD, launched two studies during her fellowship to examine the impact of cognitive rehabilitation in MS using neuroimaging. Dr. Costa, now a Kessler Foundation research scientist, leads the Neuropsychology of Eye Movements Laboratory and aspires to contribute significantly to the treatment and early intervention of cognitive deficits, improving quality of life among those who live with MS and other neurological conditions. Katie Lancaster, PhD, the second Hearst Fellow, designed a study to test an intervention for people with MS based on a newly identified form of emotion regulation—the social regulation of emotion. Current Hearst Fellow Aubree Alexander, PhD, is designing new cognitive rehabilitation techniques and evaluating their impact on daily functioning.

Dr. Chiaravalloti notes that while each of the Hearst Fellows is extremely different in background and experience, they are similar in their commitment to research and bringing improved treatments to people with disabilities.

“New lines of research, such as blood biomarking that could potentially better characterize dementia and cognitive decline, are the future,” says Dr. Chiaravalloti. “Thanks to Terri and Michael Goldberg, and support from donors like you, the future is happening now at Kessler Foundation. The next generation of mentees will continue to spark innovation, improve treatments, and help people with disabilities live to the fullest,” she concludes.

YOUR SUPPORT HARNESSSES THE POWER OF EXERCISE TO TRANSFORM MS TREATMENT

Living with multiple sclerosis is a challenge for individuals, their families, and their care partners. While disease-modifying therapies can slow the progression of MS, none of the available medications are effective in treating its wide range of debilitating symptoms. This is a major problem for people with MS, especially those with symptoms that affect their abilities to work, attend school, and care for their families.

With your support, Kessler Foundation researchers are pooling their expertise to find new ways to help individuals maintain their physical mobility, balance, and cognitive function, and cope with the fatigue and depression that often accompany MS.

To address the wide array of physical and cognitive symptoms, scientists are testing a holistic approach based on exercise interventions, according to Brian Sandroff, PhD, director of the Exercise Neurorehabilitation Laboratory in the Center for Neuropsychology and Neuroscience Research.

“Incorporating exercise rehabilitation in treatment plans has the potential to transform MS care,” he predicts. “But first, we need to establish that exercise is effective for treating MS and determine how to prescribe exercise to get the best results.” Several MS exercise studies are underway at the Foundation—Project EXACT focuses on the effects of

aerobic exercise on cognition, mobility, and the brain, and Project CogEx looks at the benefits of combined aerobic exercise and cognitive rehabilitation in progressive MS. Another exercise study is breaking new ground by applying robotic technology, thanks to the generous support of Joy and Avi Avidan.

In this ongoing experimental study, research participants walk in a wearable robot—the Ekso NR—that enables them to significantly increase their walking exercise, reaching levels that can improve their mobility and cognition, according to lead investigator, Ghaith Androwis, PhD, research scientist and director of the Rehabilitation Robotics and Research Laboratory in the Center for Mobility and Rehabilitation Engineering Research.

This randomized controlled pilot study, the first of its kind in MS, compared the effects of robotic exoskeleton-assisted exercise training with conventional gait training. Results generated international media interest following publication in medical literature. “Not only did we see large improvements in mobility and cognitive processing speed after a short course of robotic exercise training,” reports Dr. Androwis, “these improvements correlated with positive changes in the brain seen on neuroimaging.”

“Seeing these improvements is very exciting,” comments Dr. Sandroff. “It’s clear that exercise is a powerful behavior that involves many brain regions and networks. Our results show that by harnessing that power, individuals with MS may regain both physical and cognitive



Avi and Joy Avidan

function. Another important future direction in this area involves the consideration of exercise as a therapy that can potentially induce remyelination in people with MS,” he adds.

To build on the overwhelming success of the initial trial, the research team is seeking funding for a larger randomized clinical trial. The goal is to determine the immediate and long-term effects of an extended course of robot-assisted training intervention and establish guidelines for clinical applications. “Based on our initial results, we’re optimistic that this approach may be superior to the current standard of care,” says Dr. Androwis.

Improving the standard of care will mean countering the sedentary lifestyles of most people with MS. “Shifting people to active lifestyles will be a challenge,” cautions Dr. Sandroff. “Health care providers will need to act as agents of change.” He envisions the Foundation’s exercise rehabilitation research culminating in a toolkit for clinicians. “This would contain the resources needed for tailoring exercise protocols for patients with MS, setting individualized goals, and monitoring their transition to active lifestyles that improve their function and quality of life,” he concludes.



Brian Sandroff, PhD, and Ghaith Androwis, PhD, pool their expertise to find new ways to help people with MS maintain mobility, balance, and cognitive function.

By Participating in MS Research, Carla Adapts and Gives Back

Carla Basante lives with multiple sclerosis and is a longtime participant in Kessler Foundation research to help people living with MS remain engaged in their communities, workplaces, and homes.

Carla has participated in 12 research studies. Her latest examined the effects of exercise on mobility and cognition while wearing a robotic exoskeleton. “The exoskeleton is an amazing piece of technology,” says Carla. “Wearing it improved my balance, stance, gait, and posture—all areas which can decline with MS.”



Carla Basante participates in research to evaluate the impact of exercise on cognition and mobility for people living with MS.

Carla remembers how hard she worked, physically and cognitively, in the exoskeleton. “You can’t take your next step until your balance, stance, gait, and posture are in sync. I felt like my brain might explode as I worked to position my body correctly for every step. At the end of a session, I was exhausted, but I also felt strengthened and empowered.”

The coordination to walk correctly remained with Carla post training. “Back home, my muscle memory kicked in,” she explains. “I found myself automatically working mentally and physically to ensure smoother steps—as if I were still wearing the exoskeleton.”

For Carla, research participation is key to improving her quality of life with MS, but it’s also how she gives back. “I learn a lot from Kessler Foundation researchers on how to adapt, but the research that I participate in isn’t just for me—it improves the lives of everyone living with MS. Thank you, donors, for your support of Kessler Foundation research to help all of us with MS live more fully.”



Listen to a special message from Carla Basante.

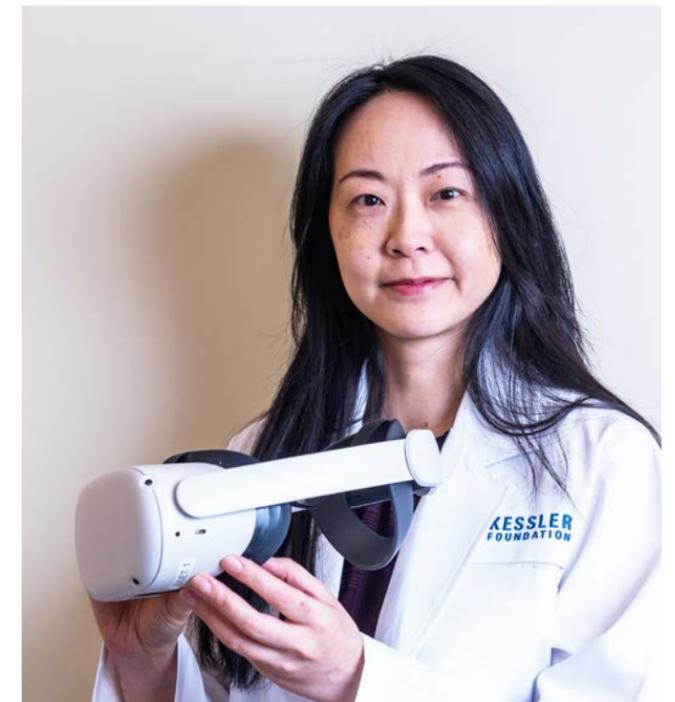
YOUR SUPPORT BRINGS VIRTUAL REALITY HOME FOR STROKE SURVIVORS

Imagine living each day completely unaware of one side of your body and personal space. You may shave or make-up only half your face, ignore anyone who approaches on one side, or step into street traffic because the red-light signal is on your affected side. You are completely unaware that anything is amiss.

These debilitating symptoms represent spatial neglect, a common complication of stroke that often escapes detection.

In comparison to the general population of individuals with stroke, those with spatial neglect experience slower physical and cognitive recovery, lower self-awareness of disability, and greater difficulty returning to their communities. The impact on patients ranges from diminished quality of life to serious injury. With your support, and that of the Wallerstein Foundation for Geriatric Life Improvement and the Charles and Ann Serraino Foundation, Kessler Foundation scientists have been leading research in this area since 2007, developing and testing tools proven to successfully identify and treat spatial neglect.

Thanks to a 2021 grant from The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey, which was founded by the Jewish community, Kessler Foundation researchers are developing and testing the effectiveness of a portable, home-based therapy program for spatial neglect using the latest virtual reality technology.



Peii (Peggy) Chen, PhD, is developing home-based treatment for spatial neglect using the latest virtual reality technology.



Listen to Dr. Peggy Chen discuss the prevalence of spatial neglect after stroke.

The newly funded project is an extension of the ongoing effort of Peii (Peggy) Chen, PhD, senior research scientist at Kessler Foundation. Since 2017, Dr. Chen and her team have been testing and refining a clinic-based treatment for spatial neglect and developed the novel, immersive virtual reality treatment called the Kessler Foundation Spatial Retraining Therapy (KF-SRT™) System. With this clinic-based treatment, patients wearing head-mounted goggles and using hand-tracking technology engage in a variety of challenging motor tasks in a computer-generated environment.

A major limitation of the clinic-based treatment is that the equipment is expensive and not portable. Many individuals with spatial neglect are unable to travel to receive treatment while others can't afford outpatient therapy immediately after inpatient care and there is an urgent need for spatial neglect treatment after inpatient rehabilitation.

To make the treatment accessible and affordable, Dr. Chen and her team are modifying the clinic-based system for use in patients' homes. "Immersive virtual reality technology is a new paradigm for spatial neglect rehabilitation," explains Dr. Chen.

Indeed, with support from Kessler Foundation Trustee Michael Davis and his wife, Francine, Dr. Chen's colleagues, Olga Boukrina, PhD, senior research scientist, and Timothy Rich, PhD, OTR/L, postdoctoral fellow, are developing and testing an additional virtual reality treatment. This treatment addresses neglect dyslexia—an under-investigated reading deficit associated with spatial neglect.



Olga Boukrina, PhD, investigates how virtual reality can help stroke survivors reduce reading errors.

"At this time, no evidence-based treatment specific to neglect dyslexia exists," says Dr. Boukrina. The treatment consists of repetitive eye movement exercises with a more advanced virtual reality goggle that has eye tracking built in to improve reading ability and quality of life.

"The Davis's are helping us understand how poor eye movement contributes to reading errors and how best to use the eye-gaze data provided by the virtual reality treatment to help stroke survivors reduce reading errors," explains Dr. Boukrina.

"Your support brings the latest technologies to the forefront of stroke rehabilitation and provides stepping-stones to future advances," concludes Dr. Chen.

"Your support brings the latest technologies to the forefront of stroke rehabilitation and provides stepping-stones to future advances."

— Peii (Peggy) Chen, PhD

Steve Makes Music Again After His Stroke

Steve Ascolese sustained a stroke in June 2020. Though not paralyzed, he lost use of his left arm, hand, and leg. "I had my stroke near the beginning of the pandemic. As part of my recovery, and to get fresh air, I'd make frequent trips in my power wheelchair throughout the neighborhood," says Steve.

Steve also had spatial neglect—an underdiagnosed effect of stroke—causing him to lose awareness of the surrounding space on his left side. "The spatial neglect prevented me from seeing the curb while directing my wheelchair. I came close to driving off the sidewalk many times," Steve recalls.

Steve's spatial neglect also made it impossible for him to read. "As an amateur musician, I was devastated that I couldn't read sheet music." When Steve heard about a Kessler Foundation study to test newly designed virtual reality treatment for correcting spatial neglect, he eagerly joined.

"I enjoyed the games and activities on the training modules; they were never boring," Steve reports. "I like that the modules can be used at home—that will save transportation time and cost."

"Thanks to your support of Kessler Foundation research, I've retrained my brain after stroke. My wheelchair travel around the neighborhood is safe and I can read and play music again. I'm grateful to be living more independently. You have my heartfelt thanks."



Steve Ascolese participates in research to retrain the brain and correct spatial neglect after stroke.

YOUR SUPPORT BRIGHTENS THE FUTURE FOR NEWBORNS AFFECTED BY THE OPIOID CRISIS

Despite actions aimed at controlling the widespread use and abuse of opioids, the opioid crisis in the United States shows little sign of abating. As more infants are born addicted, there is new urgency to the pediatric rehabilitation research being conducted by Kessler Foundation in collaboration with Children's Specialized Hospital.

In 2019, with generous support from the Reitman Foundation, researchers at Kessler Foundation, led by Amanda Botticello, PhD, MPH, associate director of the Centers for Spinal Cord Injury Research and Outcomes & Assessment Research at Kessler Foundation, joined with rehabilitation professionals at Children's Specialized to study the impact of neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS). Children's Specialized offers pediatric rehabilitation for newborns with NAS, the syndrome of acute withdrawal that affects newborns exposed to opioids before birth.

This initial funding from the Reitman Foundation enabled researchers to establish a registry of all infants admitted to inpatient rehabilitation for NAS at Children's Specialized, including data on timing of admission, types of withdrawal symptoms, response to weaning medications and therapies, type of drug exposure, and other treatment details. During pediatric rehabilitation, newborns receive specialized therapy while being gradually weaned off opiates in a calm environment.

This novel registry is the foundation for research aimed at brighter futures for newborns treated for NAS, according to Jodi Zalewitz, MD, director of the Infant Toddler Team at Children's Specialized. "Despite decades of research, we still lack consensus on the best ways to identify and treat these high-risk infants," Dr. Zalewitz explains. "This registry is an important step toward reaching those goals."

Recognizing the urgent need to accelerate NAS research, the Reitman Foundation continued its support last year, enabling researchers to greatly expand the scope of their investigation. "We were able to enroll 30 more infants in our study," reports Dr. Botticello, "and begin collecting data from their outpatient follow-up visits."

Dr. Botticello anticipates that the Reitman Foundation funding will have substantial impact. "Increasing our sample size will strengthen our findings," she notes, "and being able to follow these children as they grow is an important step toward the larger longitudinal studies we need to fill the gaps in our knowledge of the impact of NAS."

The team is focusing on understanding how treatment affects the severe symptoms of withdrawal, which disrupt feeding, sleeping, and early development. "Ultimately, we want to understand risks for developmental delays, speech difficulties, and learning disabilities, as well as the need for referrals for mental health, behavioral, and school-readiness services," says Dr. Botticello.

Because of the combined support of the Reitman Foundation and Children's Specialized, the registry will be an ongoing source of data for finding the best ways to care for survivors of NAS. "The goal is to correlate the treatment they receive at Children's Specialized with how well they do during childhood and modify neonatal care to achieve the best outcomes," she explains. "Feeding difficulties, for example, are common among babies with NAS and may contribute to the social and emotional health issues that they experience later in life. The data we are collecting will help us research ways to refine the guidelines for feeding and nutrition to reduce the risk for those issues."

"The complex needs of these infants may persist into childhood, posing new challenges for the children, their caregivers, and educators," Dr. Botticello acknowledges. "The path ahead—complicated by the stigma surrounding drug use and mental illness—demands enormous effort," she cautions, "but with the help of donors who care, we are headed in the right direction."

Drs. Botticello, Zalewitz, and the entire research team are dedicated to learning all they can about the consequences of NAS. "The advances we achieve through our partnership have the potential to impact pediatric rehabilitation on a much larger scale," they note. "Further research is critical—without it, these children may be left behind."



Amanda Botticello, PhD, MPH, seeks the best ways to care for infants with neonatal abstinence syndrome.

YOUR SUPPORT DEBUNKS MYTHS ABOUT COLLEGE-TO-WORK SUCCESSES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Call it what you will, but assumptions and misconceptions about people with disabilities are common, especially when it comes to higher educational achievement and employment opportunities for graduates. For example, some traditional viewpoints claim that college isn't a good choice for people with disabilities; they can't perform as well as their peers; and they won't find jobs after graduation.

A Kessler Foundation survey—made possible by your support—handily debunked these unfounded theories. Survey results showed that employment for recent college graduates with disabilities is at almost the same rates as their peers without disabilities. The survey data collected will provide value-added guidance points now and in the future for college students with disabilities, counselors, and educators.

“Kessler Foundation 2020 National Employment & Disability Survey: Recent College Graduates” conducted in partnership with the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability was the third in a groundbreaking series of surveys aimed at gaining detailed information on the ways people with disabilities achieve inclusion in the workplace.

Recent college graduates with disabilities were as likely to be employed as their peers without disabilities, according to the survey, with 90 percent of each group holding jobs within five years of graduation. “This result clearly suggests that higher education pays off for people with disabilities,” says John O’Neill, PhD, director of the Foundation’s Center for Employment and Disability Research. “We also found that college students with disabilities preparing for careers were just as likely to engage in internships, paid employment, and career counseling services and benefit from them like their peers without disabilities,” he adds.

More than 30 years after the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), students with disabilities are reaping the benefits of higher education. The survey results reflect opportunities now open for people with disabilities because of the ADA. “The findings provide direction for youth with disabilities and their families, counselors, educators, and therapists dedicated to supporting them as they pursue careers and economic independence,” O’Neill explains.

Survey results also suggest that community college, with its lower cost and ease of access, provides the first springboard to advanced education for about one in five recent college graduates with disabilities.

Yet challenges remain and many opportunities for improvement also emerged from the survey results. Recent graduates with disabilities were less likely to find work related to their college degree or hold permanent positions. Instead, they were more likely to work intermittently or on-call as consultants or freelancers.



John O’Neill, PhD

A pre-screened national sample of 4,738 adults completed the survey, half of whom had at least one disability, and half without disabilities. All respondents were aged 20 to 35 and had graduated from college in the last five years with an associate degree or higher.

With your support, many more analyses are planned for these data, which will add to our understanding of factors contributing to the successful college-to-work transition of people with disabilities.

✘ MYTH: College students with disabilities are relegated to offices for students with disabilities and don't access career services that are available to general college population.

✘ MYTH: People with disabilities do not want to work.

✔ TRUTH: College students with disabilities engage in academic and career preparation and internships with faculty advisors at least as much as college students without disabilities.

✔ TRUTH: A college education pays off for people with disabilities—among those who graduated in the past five years, 90 percent report holding jobs after college.



ONLY ABILITIES MATTER AT Stroll 'N Roll

Last September, Kessler Foundation's annual signature event was a first—our first-ever hybrid Stroll 'N Roll, presented by Gibbons PC, Impossible Dream, and Pfizer. People of all ages and abilities gathered in Verona Park and in their own neighborhoods to prove that abilities are what matter. Together we raised a record-breaking \$205,000 to advance rehabilitation research and employment for people with disabilities. **The generosity of champions like you made this happen.**

Inspiring leaders created teams of champions to give back and make a lasting impact. Our dedicated Stroll 'N Roll committee reached out to friends and family to make the event a success!




JOIN the FUN 10.02.22
HYBRID! IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL
 SUNDAY, 11 AM TO 2 PM, IN VERONA PARK, VERONA, NJ, AND IN OUR OWN NEIGHBORHOODS

KESSLER SOCIETY—GIVING THAT CHANGES LIVES



Henry H. Kessler, MD, PhD, founded Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation after serving in World War II.

As a Kessler Society member, you propel rehabilitation research discoveries and innovative employment initiatives. As a result, people with disabilities reimagine what's possible and realize the extraordinary. Year after year, you champion groundbreaking rehabilitation research and employment for people with disabilities—helping people take first steps, improve thinking and learning, and overcome obstacles to employment.

Kessler Society members honor Henry H. Kessler, MD, PhD, who founded Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation after serving in World War II. His vision was "...to treat the whole individual...to help him or her successfully regain physical, mental, social, vocational and economic usefulness to the fullest possible degree."

Today, Dr. Kessler's vision is reflected in the institutions that bear his name—Kessler Foundation and Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation, which consistently ranks as one of the best rehabilitation hospitals in the nation.

Our donors continue Dr. Kessler's legacy. Membership in the Kessler Society is extended to friends who make annual gifts totaling \$500 or more.

2021 Kessler Society

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\$100,000+

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Withum
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Kessler Society members honor Dr. Kessler, pictured in 1955 at the Kessler Institute Children's Clinic.

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MATCHING GIFT ORGANIZATIONS

In 2021, civic-minded organizations generously matched gifts made by individual donors.

Autodesk
Automatic Data Processing
Bank of New York Mellon
Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina
Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation Matching Gift Program
Cambridge Foundation
FannieMae Foundation
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PSEG
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Voya Financial
Workday

FUNDRAISERS

In 2021, inspired leaders raised funds to champion research and employment for people with disabilities.

The Family of Fernando Amesti, Jr.
Deanna Boehm
Welaine Cortez
Team CSRR 2021
Erin Davis, Team Gibbons
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Rosalie Hannigan
Team HR / IT / Finance
Team Isabella's Tough Cookies!
Eileen Larney
The Family of Nikolai Makarow
Celeste Maslovsky, Three Maslovsky Ladies
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The Family of Joseph Tinebra
Fran DiMaio Tramutola
Pete Welch
Woeste's Buckeye Brigade

LEGACY DONORS

We are grateful to these friends who have made provisions for Kessler Foundation in their estate plans.

John J. Brauss, Jr.
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- Francis A. Wood, MD

Remembering Our Dear Friend and Colleague Gerard Malanga, MD



In mid-May, we lost our dear friend and colleague Gerard Malanga, MD, to cancer. Gerry—as he was known—was director of the New Jersey Regenerative Institute and visiting scientist at Kessler Foundation. He was also integral to the Derfner-Lieberman Regenerative Rehabilitation Research Laboratory at Kessler Foundation funded by Jay Lieberman of the Derfner Foundation. He worked closely with Trevor Dyson-Hudson, MD, and Nathan Hogaboom, PhD, co-directors of the Derfner-Lieberman Laboratory, to pioneer regenerative rehabilitation research.

Gerry was board certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation and the subspecialties of sports medicine and pain medicine. He specialized in nonsurgical and regenerative treatments of musculoskeletal disorders including injuries of the neck, back, shoulder, and knee. He lectured throughout the United States and internationally on topics related to sports medicine, orthopedics, and pain management. Fellows came from all over the world to train with him.

At Kessler Foundation, Gerry was known for his relentless dedication to some of the most complex medical challenges of medical rehabilitation. He understood that research drives advancements in clinical care and sought to translate findings from bench to bedside. Dedicated to his work, Gerry offered his wise counsel to the very end, saying it gave him energy for his fight.

“Gerry will be missed by all of us at Kessler Foundation. We will remember and be inspired by his compassion as we continue to pursue excellence in rehabilitation research,” says Rodger DeRose, president and CEO.

The Impact of Your Generosity



\$25,000

Sponsors one research participant with spinal cord injury in a transcutaneous spinal stimulation study.



\$15,000

Sponsors one research participant with brain injury, stroke, or MS in a study to restore mobility using a robotic exoskeleton.



\$10,000

Sponsors one research participant in a study exploring new treatments using regenerative rehabilitation.



\$7,500

Sponsors one research participant with brain injury or MS in a study to improve thinking, learning, and memory.



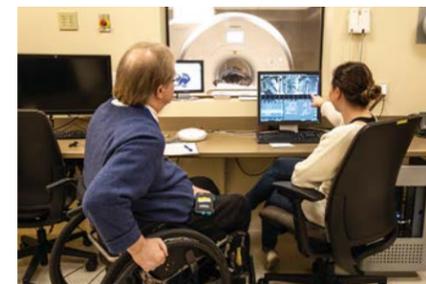
\$5,000

Sponsors one research participant in a study to treat hidden disabilities after stroke.



\$5,000

Sponsors one research participant in a study to improve quality of life after spinal cord injury.



\$2,500

Underwrites a functional MRI scan and its analysis to determine changes in the brain or spinal cord.



\$1,000

Covers the cost of one study's Institutional Review Board renewal.



\$500

Covers the cost of recruiting a research participant.

For more information, please call (973) 324-8430. Kessler Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. If you wish to remove your name from our distribution list, please contact us at (973) 324-8430 or Development@KesslerFoundation.org.



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NATHAN ADELSON HOSPICE FOUNDATION **Impact
Report
2021**



With Gratitude

KAREN RUBEL
PRESIDENT AND CEO

You make a difference for people at the end of life's journey every day. In 2021, we were so thankful to have you and other supporters helping us weather another year of the pandemic. Your belief in our mission links you to a deep commitment to our community; your support helps us to make compassionate care the hallmark of our work. Thank you for being an important part of Nathan Adelson Hospice's vision that *no one end their journey of life alone, afraid, or in pain.*



2021 Special Events

Multicultural Luncheon
550 participants

**Serenades of Life
Doctors in Concert**
850 participants

Virtual: Wine Tasting
150 participants

MAKING A DIFFERENCE Because of You

4,949 PATIENTS

4,949 patients, and thousands of family members, were provided compassionate, loving and respectful care during one of the most difficult times of their lives, which we will all face at some time.

\$1.6 MILLION IN CARE

\$1.6 Million in care, programs, and services were provided by Nathan Adelson Hospice which would not be possible without the generosity of Southern Nevada donors. The uninsured and the under-insured in our community were impacted the most by these dollars, yet the programs listed here are provided to everyone cared for by the Hospice, without reimbursement from insurance.

2,890 TRANSPORTS

The ability to transfer our patients with the same kind of compassion that is provided during their end-of-life journey, makes us unique. We understand that our patients are making the most of their last days, and a timely transport makes a difference.

FREEWILL \$1.2 MILLION ESTIMATED VALUE AT TRANSFER

An online tool provided by Nathan Adelson Hospice to help you make your end-of-life decisions while you are able! During 2021:

- 15 estate plans started
- 15 bequests and 2 contingent bequest intentions made
- 2 funeral wishes made

This easy-to-use tool allows you to make after-death gifts to ANY nonprofit you choose, not only Nathan Adelson Hospice. This type of "planned" giving allows us to prepare for the future care of all southern Nevadans, and may provide tax benefits for you.

Fellowship Education

The Fellowship Program trains new physicians to provide palliative and hospice care for patients in all settings, including the hospital, nursing homes, ambulatory clinics, and the home. Fellows receive supervised clinical experience and see at least one hundred new patients over the course of their one-year training.

Prior to Nathan Adelson Hospice Fellowship Program, medical school students interested in specializing in hospice and palliative care had to leave Nevada for training. This program enables Nevada to retain these students as well as draw medical professionals from other geographical areas.



BY SOURCE OF Funding

Bequests
\$119,590

Corporations
\$178,660

Individuals
\$936,376

Foundations
\$1,323,814

5%
BEQUESTS

7%
CORPORATIONS

51%
FOUNDATIONS

37%
INDIVIDUALS

TOTAL RAISED **\$2.6 MILLION** GROSS REVENUE

NAH FOUNDATION Program Results

Families in Need Program 250 patients and hundreds of family members were helped using our Families in Need Program.

Paws for Paul 45 patients' pets were supported using Paws for Paul – The Paul Ames Pet Therapy Program.

Camp Erin 75 children who lost a loved one were provided 'Camp in a Box' grief support kits in 2021.

Carole Fisher Meal Delivery 8,390 meals were delivered to patients and caregivers.

The Bonnie Schreck Complementary Therapies Program 644 patients received therapy treatments.

We Honor Veterans 1,044 veterans were provided respectful and compassionate care specific to their military experience.

Elaine Wynn Palliative Care Over 3,500 patients received palliative care.

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"I Can't" to

"I Can"



Shepherd Center
FOUNDATION

**Annual
Report**

Fiscal Year 2021

April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Dear Shepherd Center Friends,

Thanks to you, Shepherd Center is stronger and more vibrant than ever. Even as we navigated this most challenging year, our incredible community helped us raise more than \$110 million in support of amazing, value-added programs like recreation therapy, family housing and animal-assisted therapy, among others. Our staff remained committed to helping patients and families adjust to a new normal while rehabilitating from injury or illness. As you will read in the letter below from a recent patient, our team of therapists, nurses, support staff, technicians and physicians continue to restore lives through hard work, humor and hope.

As we continue to serve as the bridge from “I can’t” to “I can” for our patients and families, my excitement grows for all that is ahead for Shepherd Center. As we often say at Shepherd Center, family created us, and culture and excellence sustain us. Thank you for being a part of our family.



Gratefully,

Sarah L. Batts, MBA

Senior Vice President,
Office of Advancement
Shepherd Center

Executive Director
Shepherd Center Foundation

Letter from a Grateful Patient

To my medical team:

I want to send you a heartfelt thank you for the role you played in my recovery. The professionalism, kindness and care that you and your team showed me during my stay at Shepherd were difference makers for my recovery and allowed me to get where I am today. Arriving at Shepherd without any family due to Covid, paralyzed from the neck down and communicating only with my blinking eyes, was the most difficult time of my life. After that first day in the Shepherd ICU, I was moved to a room on the floor where I spent the next 10 weeks. The time you took to talk with me and my family to keep us positive was meaningful and made me feel like family. I am extremely grateful for you.

I had been at Shepherd only a day or two when my therapy team showed up in my room to get me started. This introduction to PT / OT with my team demonstrated their commitment to helping me through my illness. Days later, when I moved my index finger for the first time, my entire team and many of the patients celebrated my progress. I began to feel hopeful that recovery may be possible with hard work. I was blessed to work with so many true professionals!



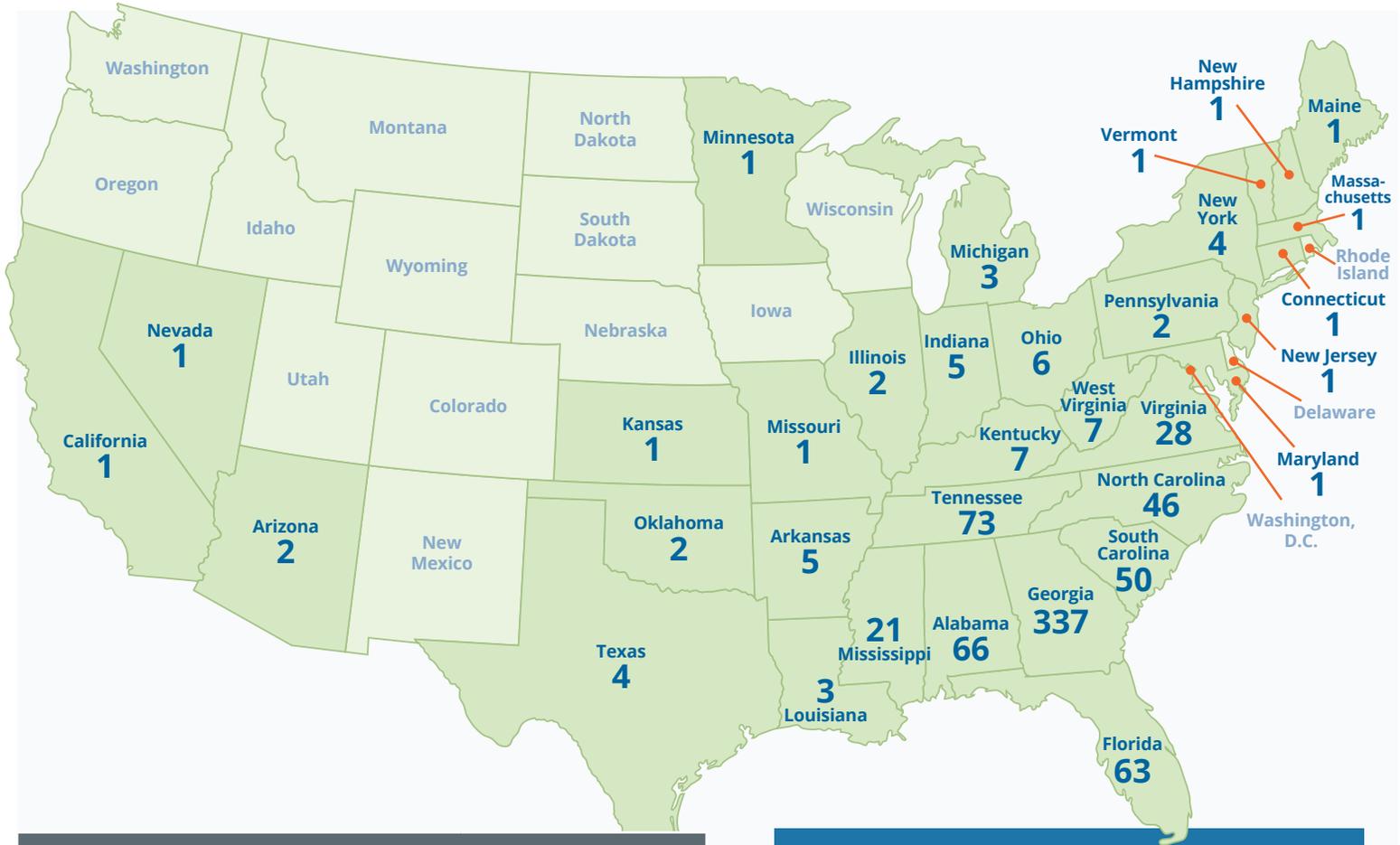
Your follow-up after I was released from the hospital has also amazed me. From making sure my transition to the Day Program went well, attending my graduation, talking to my GP so that he knew my current situation, and helping me on a Saturday when I had an issue with my prescription. What a blessing – I am so grateful! Thank You!

With Love,

David Staley

Inpatient Population — April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021

Patients at Shepherd Center come from across the country and around the globe.



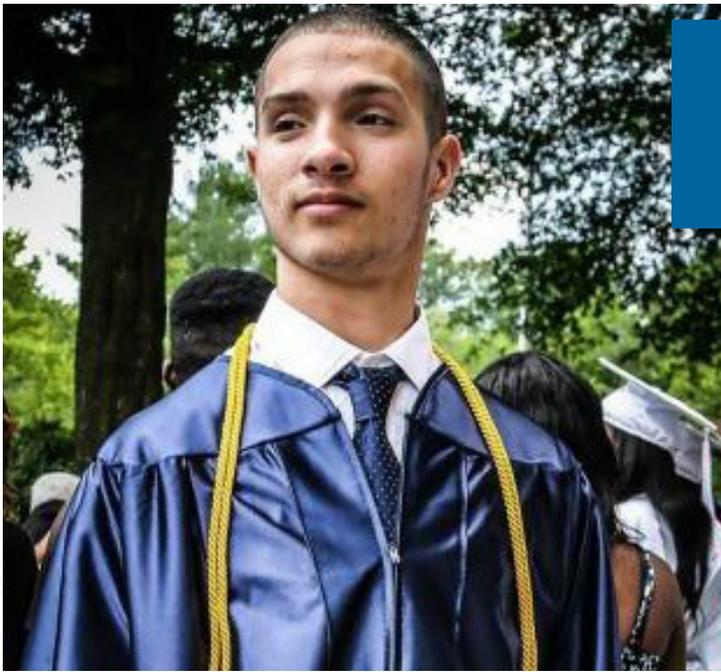
Inpatients Served FY 2021

Category	Discharges
Spinal Cord Injury (SCI)	260
Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)	215
Stroke	124
Disorders of Consciousness (DoC)	52
Dual Diagnosis	48
Neuroparalyzing	19
Medical/Surgical	18
Other	7
Total Patients	743

72% of inpatients

at Shepherd Center came from outside the metro Atlanta area.

In fiscal year (FY) 2021, Shepherd Center discharged **743 inpatients** from our rehabilitation programs.



From First Steps to the Rocky Steps

On July, 27, 2012, Parker Haller, then 16, of Woodbridge, Virginia, sustained a spinal cord injury when he leapt over an ocean wave off the Maryland coast and hit a sandbar headfirst. Before two rods, eight screws and countless hours of physical therapy, the first doctors to examine Parker gave him a 4% chance of walking again.

Parker, though, is an odds-beater. And it's all captured on his dad's YouTube channel, scottchaller. There's Parker, standing unaided for three minutes. There he is, walking with a cane for the first time. And then walking unassisted. Next, he's walking across the stage to receive his high school diploma – on time and with honors. Then, to mark the three-year anniversary of his injury, Parker's dad recorded him climbing the 72 stone steps leading to the Philadelphia Museum of Art – better known as the "Rocky" steps from the Sylvester Stallone movie classic. And there have been many more milestones since, including receiving a complete academic scholarship to George Mason University, courtesy of the Swim With Mike Organization.

To learn more about Parker, scan the QR code with your phone's camera.



Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program

As a national leader in spinal cord injury (SCI) care and research, Shepherd Center examines ways to improve the quality of life for people who have experienced an SCI. Our comprehensive SCI program is tailored to meet individual needs to optimize recovery and improve independence in patients. **In FY21, the inpatient SCI team treated 260 patients ranging in complexity from moderate to severe.**

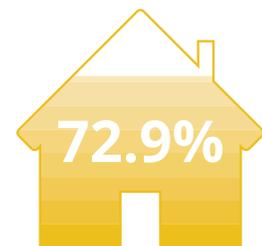
Patients receiving rehabilitation for traumatic SCI at Shepherd Center were able to return to their community at a rate **17 percentage points** higher than the UDSMR nation of inpatient rehabilitation facilities.



• Shepherd Center

Discharge to Community
Traumatic Spinal Cord Injury

Data Source: Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation (UDSMR)



• Nation of UDSMR

From Brain Injury to Fulfilling Career

When a 500-pound tractor tire fell on Kimiko Cheeley's head, it engulfed her and cut off oxygen to her brain. The resulting brain injury initially felt insurmountable. Even after spending eight days in a coma, Kimiko would not give up. After two weeks at a local hospital, Kimiko's family transferred her to Shepherd Center, where the work of life restoration began. At Shepherd, she had doctors, physical therapists, and counselors working with her, challenging her, and cheering her on. It was challenging and, at times,

discouraging, but Kimiko never once gave up. Thanks to Shepherd's unique approach to care, her hard work paid off. **For more about Kimiko, scan the QR code using your phone's camera.**

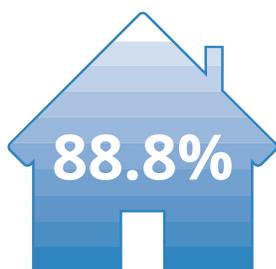


Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program

Shepherd Center's Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program provides a full continuum of services to treat patients who have experienced a brain injury. Our treatment teams consider each patient's unique condition to create a tailored treatment plan and provide educational training for family members.

In FY21, the brain injury clinical team treated 391 patients in total, including those with acquired brain injuries, traumatic brain injuries, strokes and disorders of consciousness, all varying in levels of severity.

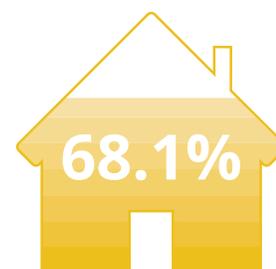
Patients receiving rehabilitation at Shepherd Center for TBI were able to return to their community at a rate **20 percentage points** higher than the UDSMR nation of inpatient rehabilitation facilities.



• Shepherd Center

Discharge to Community Traumatic Brain Injury

Data Source: Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation (UDSMR)



• Nation of UDSMR

From Young Stroke to Law Graduate



No one expects to have a stroke, especially when you're a young adult. Seth Dickinson was an 18-year-old freshman at Ole Miss with aspirations of one day running for public office when he experienced a brain aneurysm and stroke in March 2015. Less than six months after experiencing the catastrophic stroke, Seth was able to take a full load of online classes in the fall of 2015. He has now graduated from college and law school, where he wrote public policy and advocated for people with disabilities. **For more about Seth, scan the QR code with your phone's camera.**



Stroke Rehabilitation Program

In FY21, Shepherd Center's Stroke Rehabilitation Program treated 124 patients, and 110 of these patients were considered complex and severe.

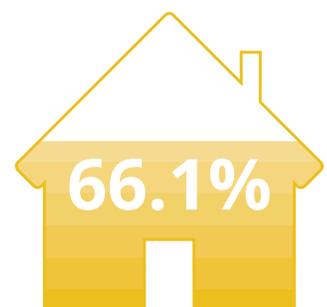
Patients receiving rehabilitation for stroke at Shepherd Center were able to return to their community at a rate **25 percentage points** higher than the UDSMR nation of inpatient rehabilitation facilities.



• Shepherd Center

Discharge to Community Stroke

Data Source: Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation (UDSMR)



• Nation of UDSMR



From Multiple Sclerosis Diagnosis to Research Participant

Paul Fleming has always been an active person. As a young man, he played football for Tennessee

State University. These days, Paul loves to go fishing, cycle and coach middle school football. He and his wife, Cheryl, also keep busy looking after their three children, Ashley, Paul and Christopher. But in 2004, Paul started having seizures that temporarily derailed Paul's busy lifestyle.

A neurologist referred Paul to the Andrew C. Carlos Multiple Sclerosis Institute at Shepherd Center.

He was officially diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) by Ben Thrower, M.D., medical director of the MS Institute. Paul has been visiting Shepherd Center twice a year since 2004 for infusions to manage his MS symptoms, and in 2019, he began participating in Shepherd Center's MS research program.

For more about Paul, scan the QR code with your phone's camera.



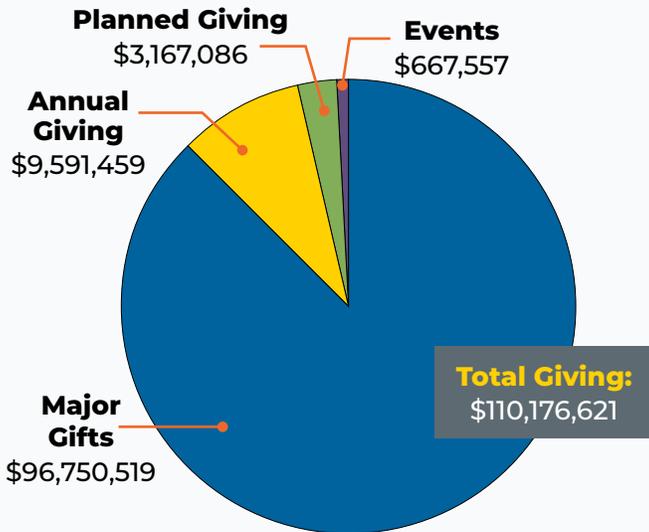
Outpatient Services

Shepherd Center includes a diverse array of outpatient services. **The total number of outpatient visits for FY21 was more than 33,000.** Nearly 36% of these visits were completed via telehealth, which was dramatically scaled up to meet our patient's needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

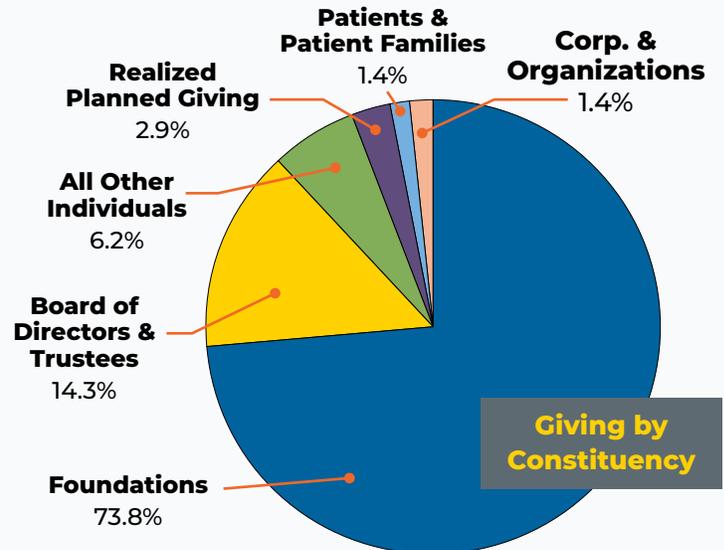
From Investment to Impact

Shepherd Center is a not-for-profit hospital, relying on philanthropic support from individuals, families, corporations and foundations. Donations help fund patient care programs, patient equipment, family housing, special and capital projects, technology and educational programs. These projects and programs are the reason Shepherd Center is the top destination for neurorehabilitation. To learn how you can contribute in a variety of ways, visit the Shepherd Center Foundation online at give.shepherd.org.

Fundraising Total for FY 2021



Donations to Shepherd Center Foundation during FY 2021 came from the groups below.



Spotlight on Giving

Women Shaping Shepherd:

In FY21, Shepherd Center's women's philanthropy circle raised \$130,000 that supports the Patient Assistance Fund. This fund assists patients who are unfunded, underfunded and provides items that are not covered by insurance.



ShepherdCares:

Our employees and staff are also loyal and cherished supporters of Shepherd Center through the ShepherdCares employee giving campaign.

88%
Employee participation

» **\$57,000**
Amount over goal

» **\$231,825.26**
Amount pledged by employees

» **\$105,000**
Amount given in challenge grants by generous donors

= **\$336,825.26**
Total raised by ShepherdCares



Hospital Financials

Financial Summary and Operating Statement
For Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2021

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

Patient Services Revenue	\$249,688,660
Other Revenue	\$30,273,190
Investment Income	\$16,008,415
Total Operating Revenue	\$295,970,265
Less: Operating Expenses	\$281,109,722
Provision For Improvements, Equipment And New Services	\$14,860,543

Charitable Services Rendered (At Cost)

Uncompensated Care (Patients Without Funding)	\$8,548,213
Undercompensated Care (Underfunded Government Programs)	\$14,597,567

Donated Property and Equipment

Donations Of Property And Equipment	\$2,602
Donations Used To Purchase Property And Equipment	\$2,022,610
Total Donated Property And Equipment	\$2,025,212



#ShepherdDayInTheLife







SHEPHERD
CENTER



The Billi Marcus Building

The Jane Woodruff Pavilion

Shepherd Center, located in Atlanta, Georgia, is a private, not-for-profit hospital specializing in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injury, brain injury, stroke, multiple sclerosis, spine and chronic pain, and other neuromuscular conditions. Founded in 1975, Shepherd Center is ranked by U.S. News & World Report among the top 10 rehabilitation hospitals in the nation. In its more than four decades, Shepherd Center has grown from a six-bed rehabilitation unit to a world-renowned, 152-bed hospital that treats more than 743 inpatients, 277 day program patients and more than 7,161 outpatients each year in more than 46,000 visits.

IMPACT REPORT

2022

The strength of TESS Research Foundation comes from YOU, our TESS Community. You are helping us pursue our mission of improving the lives of families affected by SLC13A5 Epilepsy as we seek early diagnosis, effective treatments, and ultimately a cure for this complex neurological disorder.

We are so grateful for you,
and all that we accomplished together in 2021:



STRENGTHENING
COMMUNITY

120+ from **25** on **5**
children countries continents

Fully Enrolled
remote
Natural History Study

15 US & International
Family Support
Meetings



DRIVING
RESEARCH

\$1.1M+
committed for
SLC13A5 research

9 TESS-funded
research
projects

1 gene therapy in preclinical development



AMPLIFYING
ENGAGEMENT

Organized & hosted
7th annual
Research
Roundtable

4 peer-reviewed publications

9 e-newsletters | **7** *Science Simplified* posts

18

opportunities for
speaking, representation
& collaboration



DEEPLY
GRATEFUL

100+ new donors
300+ unique donors
500 individual gifts
12 peer-to-peer fundraisers

\$381K+ raised in 2021

But numbers don't tell our whole story. And being one of 7000+ rare diseases doesn't tell our whole story.

Our story is what YOU are making possible:



Connections



Scientific
Understanding
and Progress



Collaboration



Actions



Motivation,
Inspiration,
Hope

CONNECTIONS

SLC13A5 Epilepsy is a rare genetic epilepsy that knows no geographic boundaries. **You are helping to build a supportive, connected, and information-based community for children and families affected by SLC13A5 Epilepsy.** When a child receives an SLC13A5 Epilepsy diagnosis, it can be a relief for parents. But it's also emotional. And overwhelming. And scary.

With your help, we now have identified more than 93 families and 120 children from five countries on nearly every continent! We host monthly Family Support Zoom calls, publish a Family Newsletter, and run a private Facebook group for affected families. On these platforms, we share perspectives, offer comfort, and foster connections between families who truly understand what it means to have a child with SLC13A5 Epilepsy.



Thank you for ensuring that no one is alone on this journey.



“When Halldora was 2.5 years old, we did a DNA test and received an SLC13A5 Epilepsy diagnosis. We found TESS Research Foundation, where the team suggested a new medication that changed her life. **We have so much gratitude for TESS and all the connections we have with other families that are in, as close as it gets, the same situation as we are.** **”**

SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING, PROGRESS, AND COLLABORATION

By funding basic science research, you are advancing our understanding of the SLC13A5 gene, the protein NaCT, and its role in citrate transport into the cell. You are also making possible the study of SLC13A5 Epilepsy using patient-derived iPSCs; the launch of digital, remote, and in-person Natural History Studies; and progress towards treatments and a cure for SLC13A5 Epilepsy. Your support provides seed funding for SLC13A5 research, which then enables research teams to apply for grants from larger organizations like the NIH to continue their SLC13A5 studies.

While seizures are among the key manifestations of SLC13A5 Epilepsy, we know all too well that there are many other symptoms of this severe neurological disorder and it is important to recognize and study all aspects of the disease. This year, [TESS Research Foundation](#) partnered with [Uplifting Athletes](#) to support Naomi Dirckx, PhD, and her studies on the role of citrate in bone and tooth development. Dr. Dirckx now has detailed micro-CT scans from primary teeth received from patients affected by SLC13A5 Epilepsy and she found very similar features compared to the mouse models. This will enable us to start understanding why defects in citrate metabolism affects tooth mineralization in SLC13A5 patients!



“ I have always been excited that changes in citrate can affect bone mass and tooth development in our mouse models. Citrate acts like "glue" to keep bone minerals together--too little or too much can have negative effects on bone mineral densities.

As a basic scientist, I am occupied with figuring out how molecules work and communicate with each other. **This is very exciting and needed to understand diseases, but can feel very far away from the "real world."** I recently had the opportunity to meet Ellie and her parents. **This really opened my eyes.**

I am extremely motivated to unravel the molecular mechanisms downstream of the SLC13A5 transporter. I am certain the dedication and joined forces of everyone working with TESS will lead to great discoveries and eventually a cure. I am grateful to be part of the TESS family and to tackle this disease with scientists from different fields, all over the world. ”

-Naomi Dirckx, PhD



“ It took three months before we had Ellie's diagnosis. Prior to that, her seizures were attributed to blood on her brain during delivery. TESS' advocacy to include SLC13A5 Epilepsy on the epilepsy gene panel was key to our ability to move toward diagnosis.

As parents, we went through the seven stages of grief. We mourned the life we had envisioned for Ellie. It was not until this year that I truly accepted the diagnosis for what it is: a silver lining. We cherish the little moments, celebrate the tiniest of victories, and have become better parents and advocates. She has shown us the strength and tenacity we need to fight through the suffering that this disorder can cause. **Do we have a lot of fears and worry constantly about Ellie? Every single day. Is there a lot more hope than there ever was? ABSOLUTELY.**

With the support of the TESS community, our family, friends, Ellie's neurologist, and researchers, we know that nothing will stand in her way of accomplishing all her hopes and dreams.”

- Erika Pae, Ellie's mom

PROGRESS IN GENE THERAPY

Gene therapy—the process of introducing a healthy copy of a gene—is a scientific advancement that brings incredible promise and requires great patience. It isn't unusual for a gene therapy pathway to be long—9 to 15 years—and costly—upwards of \$3 billion from pre-discovery to market.

Rachel Bailey, PhD, and her laboratory at UT Southwestern, developed an SLC13A5 gene therapy model in mice. Dr. Bailey and is currently working with Taysha Gene Therapies to develop a protocol for clinical trials. In January 2021, Taysha announced it received both rare pediatric disease and orphan drug designations from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for TSHA-105, an AAV9-based gene therapy in development for SLC13A5 Epilepsy. In August, the European Commission awarded TSHA-105 Orphan Drug Designation—these designations help to identify SLC15A5 gene therapy as a potentially promising treatment for those affected by SLC13A5 Epilepsy. We look forward to sharing our continued progress in this area.

*“We are developing a treatment option that aims to improve the lives of children affected by SLC13A5 Epilepsy. The process is lengthy, beginning with preclinical studies in cell or animal models that provide information for dosing, safety, and efficacy. This is followed by preparing a potential study for humans. In disorders like SLC13A5 Epilepsy, a Natural History Study provides critical knowledge about the natural progression of the disease. It also helps determine the potential impact of a therapy on the disease and helps identify outcome measurements. The last phases include an application period and clinical trials for the treatment protocol. It is incredibly meaningful to know how far we have come in such a short time. **Gene therapy holds significant hope for families affected by SLC13A5 Epilepsy.**”*

– Rachel Bailey, PhD



Our vision is large and the steps toward a cure may seem incremental. However, in eight years, TESS Research Foundation has gone from gene discovery to the prospect of a gene therapy for SLC13A5 Epilepsy.

We couldn't have done it without you.

NATURAL HISTORY STUDY

Because parents—and siblings—are the day-to-day caregivers and advocates, it is important to acknowledge that SLC13A5 Epilepsy affects families, not just the individual diagnosed with SLC13A5 Epilepsy. By centering the patient voice, we ensure the family is recognized as the true expert of the SLC13A5 Epilepsy. It is important for regulatory bodies like the FDA to have documented and published data detailing the symptoms and progression of disease. With your support, we launched a 3-part Natural History Study (NHS) to aid in our understanding of SLC13A5 Epilepsy over time. The study includes a:



DIGITAL NHS:

medical records collection and analysis with Ciitizen



REMOTE NHS:

telehealth visits and questionnaire



IN-PERSON NHS:

patient visits at Stanford, Brown, or UTSW / lab analysis of biomarkers

In March 2020, we began partnering with Ciitizen for SLC13A5 Epilepsy medical records collection and the digital component of the NHS. We have enrolled nearly every family diagnosed with SLC13A5 Epilepsy in the United States. In addition to enabling the medical community to learn about SLC13A5 Epilepsy using de-identified data through a centralized repository of medical data, this partnership also empowers families to better understand and control their medical data. We are now analyzing this information and sharing it with the scientific and clinical communities. Most importantly, this is communicating what families already know about SLC13A5 Epilepsy – that it is a complicated, life-altering disease that includes more than seizures – to the people who are studying SLC13A5 Epilepsy.

Brenda Porter, MD, PhD, is leading our multi-site, in-person Natural History Study. Dr. Porter launched the study at Stanford in collaboration with Judy Liu, MD, PhD, at Brown University and Kim Goodspeed, MD, at the University of Texas Southwestern (UTSW). The goal of this study is to better characterize the course of the disease and identify biomarkers for SLC13A5 Epilepsy. What we learn will be crucial to advancing drug treatments and gene therapies into clinical trials! We are so appreciative of the families who are participating in our Natural History Study, which is made possible by YOU!



EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, COMMUNITY

Two years ago, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI) awarded TESS Research Foundation a transformative \$450,000 capacity-building grant and an opportunity to build and strengthen relationships with others in the rare disease space. This year, [we were awarded an additional \\$150,000 and continued engagement with the Rare As One Network](#). In addition to expanding our team to include a scientific director and a development director, we have gained invaluable resources and partnerships that are elevating our ability to educate, advocate, and build community:

Our Science Simplified blogs, with topics ranging from [How to Read a Scientific Paper](#) to [What is Gene Therapy?](#) make SLC13A5 science accessible to patients, families, donors, and our broader community.

“In November 2021, we hosted a Research Roundtable in Baltimore to promote sharing of information and synergy amongst our key stakeholders and scientific research teams. In addition, TESS Research Foundation represented SLC13A5 Epilepsy at five research meetings. Because science is often a siloed discipline, opportunities to create and promote open science are highly valued and have great benefit for everyone.”
- Tanya Brown, PhD



Building awareness is vital to our continuing pursuit of diagnosing, treating, and curing SLC13A5 Epilepsy. Last year, TESS Founder and executive director Kim Nye was invited to speak at more than ten partner, industry, and peer organizations and was a guest on three podcasts. Kim shared her family's story and her perspectives on building a patient-centered network, gene therapy, and clinical trial readiness.

Curing The Epilepsies



CURE Epilepsy



Global Genes



TESS continues to have a growing presence on three major social media platforms, and we are grateful for every interaction, like, retweet, and share! The creation of a community is invaluable to our fundraising efforts—12 Facebook fundraisers raised more than \$20,000!—and you are vital to our ability to reach as many people as possible. Our SLC13A5 Epilepsy Superheroes are easily the most engaging but we are grateful to everyone who helped spread the word on SLC13A5 Awareness Day and every day.

THANK YOU, TESS Community, for powering TESS Research Foundation.

We are deeply grateful for you.