WESTERN MARYLAND HEALTH SYSTEM FOUNDATION

Where the Heart is

2022 ANNUAL GRATITUDE REPORT

NEWS FOR DONORS AND FRIENDS

Friends,

Twenty-two years ago, the Western Maryland Health System Foundation positioned itself to be part of the solution—the solution to a challenge that was just beginning to appear on the horizon.

The Foundation developed a healthcare scholarship program, and in 2001, selected the first five recipients. Two decades later, the once-distant possibility of a healthcare staffing challenge is a reality, making headlines across the nation. I'm proud to say that the Foundation's investment has been significant and impactful: more than $1.3 million in scholarships to over 140 local health care providers, including 84 nurses, six therapists, twelve physicians and advanced practice providers, and over two dozen support staff. The majority of those students have devoted their lives to serving patients at UPMC Western Maryland. They represent a critical piece of the care we provide locally.

Meanwhile, as the need for skilled caregivers intensifies, the WMHS Foundation is once again pivotal in creating a solution. Last year, the Foundation developed a strategic partnership with Allegany College of Maryland (ACM) and is supporting additional faculty and scholarships to increase the number of graduates of their nationally recognized Registered Nursing Program.

Enjoy the following stories of our outstanding staff and their work.
You helped make this possible!

Karen Johnson
Chief Development Officer
WMHS Foundation

Each life touches so many others...

As we mark our third anniversary as part of the world-class UPMC network, we continue to focus on the issues that are vital to our community. We remain grateful to the Foundation for investing in our hometown hospital, even as our larger network continues to build on a reputation of excellence through expanded service lines, state-of-the-art treatment, and compassionate care.

The expansion of our Heart and Vascular service line, for instance, responds directly to a community health survey that isolated the need for chronic disease management, specifically as it pertains to heart disease and stroke. In these pages, we are proud to showcase these enhanced services for you, with the most advanced technology and cutting-edge treatment options available.

As the region's largest employer, we will always view our staff as heroes and our work as a privilege in serving the healthcare needs of this region. Our people touch and care for thousands and thousands of lives every year. Investing in our staff, as we do in partnership with the WMHS Foundation, makes us all stronger.

Michele Martz
President
UPMC Western Maryland

2022 WMHS Foundation Board of Directors

WMHS Foundation Board of Directors from left, top row: Kim B. Leonard, CHAIR; Betty Jo Gehauf, VICE CHAIR; George Lapp, SECRETARY/TREASURER; Carl O. Belt, Jr.; Larry D. Boggs; Richard "Doc" Daugherty; Thomas B. Finan; Marlee Gabriele.

Bottom row, from left: Kim Kremer, AUXILIARY PRESIDENT; Chris Lockard; Dave Mathews; John "Jack" McMullen, Jr., Esq; Robert Paye, Esq; Keith Pirolozzi, PharmD; Liz Rhodes; Sandi Saville, Esq; Rameen Shafiei, DO.

— Dr. Rameen Shafiei, DO, U.S. Acute Care Solutions at UPMC Western Maryland & WMHS Foundation Board of Directors

As director of Emergency Medicine at UPMC Western Maryland, the charitable work of the WMHS Foundation helps a tremendous portion of our underserved patients and the populations most in need. This includes accessing medications and services that may be cost prohibitive and assisting with the needs of those in distress.

I am committed to supporting our patients and families when they are most vulnerable and help is most needed."

Financial Impact

Balance as of December 31, 2022

Assets $19.4 Million

Total 2022 Support for our Mission
$770,900
(UPMC Western Maryland, Scholarships, Staff Support, Patients in Need)

Something to feel good about!

Nurturing Your Investment

The WMHS Foundation has been investing in the education of healthcare professionals for over two decades. If you are a patient at UPMC Western Maryland, chances are good you will be cared for by a Foundation-educated caregiver.

The WMHS Foundation's investment in these outstanding nurses has provided care for over 750,000 patients. From left, Erica Messenger, Operating Room nurse expert; Chris Cline, Intensive Care Unit nurse expert; Pam Jenkins, Emergency Department unit director.

Erica Messenger always wanted to be a nurse. "Ever since I was a little girl, I've wanted to help people," she says. She wanted to make a difference in people's lives. And every day she walks into the Operating Room (OR) at UPMC Western Maryland and does just that.

As a professional staff nurse expert in the OR, Erica works as a circulator, which requires that she remain keenly aware of all aspects of the case at hand – equipment, surgeon's needs, charting, and most importantly, the patient. She is the patient's advocate. As she talks with each one before surgery, her compassion, knowledge and years of experience show. She clarifies expectations, answers questions, and – perhaps most importantly – reassures the patient she will remain with them throughout the procedure. ***"I always make that promise – we are going to take the best care of you that we can."*** Erica is the kind of nurse you want on your side.

As a WMHS Foundation scholar from 2006–2008, Erica received a $4,000 per semester **Employee Family Scholarship** to pursue her RN at Allegany College of Maryland. Upon graduation, she came to work at UPMC Western Maryland to fulfill her two-year scholarship commitment, and she's been here ever since. Ever improving, Erica recently attained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) as well.

Erica's team performs four to five surgeries a day, in one of 14 operating suites keeping similar schedules. She's also on call to the Emergency Room and – one of her favorite assignments – Labor and Delivery. Erica genuinely enjoys being a nurse and working with the OR staff. "I love my nurses," she says. "When you need people to be there for you, we come together."

"We make a difference every day," says Erica. And though most of her patients will not remember her after surgery and anesthesia, Erica says that she doesn't need a pat on the back. It's enough to know she and her team have fulfilled their promise.

In 2006, **Chris Cline** was a unit secretary at the hospital, married, with a young son. She had deliberately *not* chosen a nursing career, even though that was the path of her mother – Pam Kline served 50 years at UPMC Western Maryland. But as Chris worked closely with the hospital staff, her interest in the profession grew. Her coworkers recognized traits in her which would lead to excellence in caregiving. They encouraged her to consider nursing school, and she was selected to receive the coveted **Nursing Excellence Scholarship**, which covers all educational expenses plus two days educational leave per week. Those days off were key, she says. "I had a young family and was trying to make ends meet. Having the Foundation pay for my school and cover my hours so I could cut back my time to study was a tremendous relief."

In the intervening fifteen years, Chris has achieved her bachelor's degree in nursing, added two sons to the family, and worked in several nursing leadership roles at UPMC WMD. For the last two years, she has been in the ICU, and quick math will tell you she was in that challenging arena during the COVID pandemic. Chris has earned

the respect of her colleagues and enjoys her role as one of the senior nurses on her shift. She mentors the newer nurses ("the babies") with care and pride. "We're family," she says. "We're not only taking care of our patients – we're taking care of each other."

"You build relationships – you make an impact on people's lives," she added. There are plenty of times they've all cried over the loss of a patient. But as much as she would have liked a different outcome, she reminds her fellow nurses that there is nothing they should have done differently. ***"As nurses, we love our patients and are there for them and their families,"*** she says.

Pam Jenkins is a nurse leader in one of the most challenging and publicly scrutinized areas of the hospital: the Emergency Department. Her calm, pleasant demeanor reflects the heart of a woman whose mission is to serve those who come to us in crisis. She is respectful, yet resilient and strong, with 28 years of experience in addressing one challenge after another, frequently multiples at once.

Like Chris and Erica, Pam has experienced a variety of shifts and departments, grateful for the flexibility a hospital nursing career provides. While her children were young, she worked weekends as a critical care float nurse across the hospital. That experience proved invaluable, while fitting her family's needs perfectly.

In 2015, with 19 years as an RN, Pam also received the Foundation's **Nursing Excellence Scholarship,** to pursue her BSN. "I would not have gone back to school if the Foundation had not helped me," she says. "I was raising two kids and had a house payment and a car payment. If I had needed to pay for it on my own, I wouldn't have gone back, I can pretty much guarantee it."

Recently, Pam accepted the unit director position – not a route she had planned on, but rather an opportunity where she felt she could contribute. Her goal now is "to make things better so that the public feels secure coming here." While striving to improve the ED experience for patients and their families, she is not naïve to the challenges of serving over 100 patients a day and supervising a 24/7 operation with 85 staff members.

Recent improvements include an ED card checklist, to help patients navigate expectations and progress during their visit. Four new hospitality associates round within the department, answering questions and connecting with patients. Vertical care is another recent success – a process to help expedite assessment and treatment during peak patient arrival times. Although there is more work to be done, these new protocols have cut down significantly on patients who have left without being seen. "We're going in the right direction," Pam says.

"Sometimes it's hard to understand why we take patients in the order we do, or why we have delays." She recognizes that people may be fearful when coming to the ER, and that it can feel like "hurry up and wait." But she reassures us that she and her team are working to provide a safe, healing experience.

"I want people to understand that the ER staff are people from your community. They live next to you and shop at the same grocery store. Their kids go to school here." She pauses. ***"We are people just like you, who choose to do this to help those who are hurting."***

Erica, Chris and Pam are just three of the 600+ nurses at UPMC Western Maryland. Together, the trio represents nearly 60 years' experience and the care of over 750,000 patients. Erica's patients may not remember her, but you can be grateful she was in the room, advocating at the side of nearly 20,000 of them. Chris has taken care of hundreds of the most critical patients in the hospital – working mostly at night, no less – and will leave her mark in the legacy of the nurses she mentors every shift. And Pam has accepted one of the biggest challenges in healthcare – here and everywhere – running a timely, safe Emergency Department.

These are our heroes, and this is their legacy and ours. Truly, something to feel good about!

Erica Messenger truly loves what she does. "I simply did not have the money to attend college," she said. Because of your investment, Erica did not incur student loans for her schooling.

The Heart and Vascular Institute continues to grow with each patient success. Last year alone, the program performed over 25% more open-heart surgeries than in 2021.

Heart and Home

For five generations, Gary Guard's family has farmed a breathtaking stretch along the Youghiogeny River. The large red barn and scenic pastures look like they came off the pages of a storybook. His great grandfather cleared much of the sprawling acreage over 125 years ago. Yet behind such a picturesque setting are the realities of a working family farm – a rigorous lifestyle and a rugged clan with a strong work ethic. Challenges are expected and frequent. So when Gary learned that he had a faulty heart valve, he responded with characteristic resilience: face the issue, deal with it, and move on.

"I've had a heart murmur all my life," said Gary. "And no one seemed overly concerned about it until 2018, when I had a more thorough physical." Though he suffered no symptoms, his heart valve could not continue to pump sufficient oxygen-rich blood. His doctor told him he needed open-heart surgery, and she recommended him to Dr. Mark Nelson at UPMC Western Maryland. "He's the best in the country," she told him.

Gary was told to expect an eight-week recovery, and since his was not considered an emergent situation, he was able to time the procedure around his work. In addition to the fall harvest on the farm, he plows snow during the winter, sometimes for 12-hour shifts. He decided on an August surgery. "I was in on a Friday and home by Wednesday," Gary says. "Dr. Nelson and I spoke in the morning, about 7 o'clock, and the next thing I knew it was 5 o'clock and I was in recovery. He told me everything had come out well. He was no-nonsense and a great doctor." He also praises the nursing staff who cared for him in the Cardiovascular Unit (CVU). "You just couldn't ask for better care" he said. "Those nurses were right on it. It was the best care I've ever received. If you've got a heart issue, there's the place to go."

After returning to the farm, Gary pushed himself every day by walking – first out to the mailbox and eventually up and over the hill into the pasture. He was careful not to lift anything heavier than a gallon of milk, and by Labor Day, Dr. Nelson cleared him to get back to driving the combine.

Gary grew stronger over the next few months, happy to be back to the hard life he loves – with a bonus. After his surgery, he reconnected with a friend whose spouse had passed away. The two of them chopped wood together on their first date, and Gary found that Barbara genuinely enjoyed working the farm with him. They were married in November 2022 and are enjoying this next chapter of their lives. At 73, Gary says he has never felt better. He hopes to live a long life with Barbara at his side. In April, they plan to cruise to Alaska.

To ensure that others continue to receive the excellent care Gary received, he and Barbara have included the WMHS Foundation in their will. Recently, they also decided to express their thanks to Dr. Nelson and the CVU staff by dedicating Room 306 in the CVU. Their satisfaction in giving, now and into the future, is our blessing. "I thought, yes, I've donated through my will," Gary said, "but why can't they have a little bit of it now?"

Gary and Barbara, we are very grateful! All the best to you newlyweds.

Gary's nephew Jeremiah (center) represents the fifth generation of the Guard family farm. Together, he and his father Dorsey and Gary bring in the harvest.

The Heart of Care

Just three years since integrating, UPMC Western Maryland is pumping new energy into its award-winning cardiac program. An exceptional team of professionals is providing the world-class care that UPMC is known for at our hometown hospital, in a newly created *Heart and Vascular Institute* (HVI).

More than 20 years ago, cardiothoracic surgeon **Dr. Mark Nelson** and his team established the only open-heart surgery program in Maryland west of Baltimore. That remains the case today. Since then, we have performed more than 4,800 open-heart surgeries and gained national recognition and numerous accolades. One of the drivers of that success, according to many, is the state-of-the-art Cardiovascular Unit where patients receive round-the-clock care until discharge.

Building on that strong reputation, the new HVI locates the entire cardiology team in one suite, providing ease of access for patients and rapid collaboration among specialties. **Dr. Christopher Haas** has served UPMC Western Maryland for over two decades and provides leadership as medical director of Cardiology. **Dr. Hani Alkhatib**, director of Structural Cardiology, and **Drs. Pradham Ram** and **Neil Schacter** are the latest additions to the team, each bringing unique clinical expertise and all joining in the palpable sense of esprit de corps in the department.

In fact, Dr. Alkhatib says that joining such a strong program was an easy decision to make. The reputation of the cardiac program, leveraged with the expertise of the entire UPMC network, covers the full spectrum of conditions, including artery disease, congestive heart failure, heart valve disease, and, since November 2022, atrial fibrillation, right here in Allegany County. "Providing new, evidence-based, top-rated cardiovascular care at the local level is one of our main priorities," says Dr. Alkhatib.

The Foundation is proud to claim a special connection to the HVI program, since several Foundation scholars have been integral to its success: *HVI Director Savannah Kenney* (2009, 2017-18); *Lead Advanced Practice Professional, Cardiothoracic Surgery, Heidi Race* (2005-07); *PA Eric Williams* (2014-16); CRNP Allison Rexrode (2016-17); and *Professional Staff Nurse Samantha Wampler* (currently enrolled).

Savannah says, "We are proud to be the newest addition to UPMC's world-class HVI program, built on a long history of outstanding heart care here in Cumberland."

Foundation Friends Circles of Giving

Introducing a new way of giving that will keep our Foundation evergreen.

On March 28, the Foundation introduces our biannual **Dinner with a Doc** event, one of the exclusive benefits of joining our ***Circles of Giving***.

For this first-of-its-kind evening, we are delighted to feature Dr. Hani Alkhatib, director of our Structural Heart Program. Dr. Alkhatib has just implemented two cutting-edge procedures at UPMC Western Maryland: TAVR (transcatheter aortic valve replacement) and Watchman (devices for non-valvular atrial fibrillation stroke reduction).

If you haven't already joined our ***Circles of Giving*** to receive these and other benefits, consider an annual pledge of $100 or more to bring you into the fold. Scan the above QR code to learn more!

Truly, your investments are changing lives!

*In 2016, I decided to continue my career by pursuing a nurse practitioner degree and was awarded the **Nancy D. Adams Scholarship**. Over the last five years, I have enjoyed providing cardiovascular care here at UPMC Western Maryland and am now located in the new Heart and Vascular Institute.*

Recently, a patient was experiencing chest pain during a stress test, and I was able to intervene quickly and recommend an urgent cardiac catheterization. As a result, the patient was found to have significant coronary artery disease which required bypass, and he was rushed into surgery the next morning. The gentleman had mistakenly arrived a day early for his test, which may have saved his young life.

— Allison Rexrode, CRNP, Heart and Vascular Institute

Something to feel good about!

Our Generous Contributors

Our donors are a unique circle of supporters who wholeheartedly respond to the needs of UPMC Western Maryland. In this 2022 Gratitude Report, we recognize their annual cash, pledged, sponsorship, Giving Circles, and in-kind gifts to UPMC Western Maryland, the WMHS Foundation, and the WMHS Auxiliary.

One of our most enjoyable gatherings annually is the Foundation's THANKSgiving event, when Karen recounts the stories of those we've been privileged to help throughout the year. Here, Foundation Board Chairman Kim Leonard and UPMC Western Maryland President Michele Martz meet at the podium to kick off the evening.

Foundation Lead Partner

WMHS Auxiliary

Grant Partners

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UPMC Locum Clinicians

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Dr. David S. Hijab, DDS, PA
Rita Hout

Something to feel good about!

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Pioneers, $100

This newest giving category reflects donations at this level to our Circles of Giving Program.

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Five additional Legacy donors asked to remain anonymous.

"I support the work of the WMHS Foundation because I feel it is important to have quality health care available in rural communities like ours."

— Sandi Saville, Esq., WMHS Foundation Board

Golf Classic 2022

Another grand success!

Mark your calendars!

2023 Golf Classic

Dinner, **September 14**

Tournament, **September 15**

Our annual tournament, dinner, and auction are a highlight on the Foundation calendar, both for those who love the game and for others who enjoy the auction. In 2022, our events netted $120,000. Pictured, left to right, are Adam Sterne, The Belt Group; UPMC WMD President Michele Martz; Chief Nursing Officer James Karstetter; Director of Nursing Chrissy Lechliter; and Andy Salonish, Lead Interventional Tech at UPMC WMD.

Platinum $15,000+

Moran Coal Company, Inc.

Western Maryland Scenic Railroad**

Diamond $10,000+

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Rita Hout

Lodestone Golf Course/ Wisp Resort**

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** All or part of these donations were in-kind gifts to our golf auction.

Game & Hole Sponsors $750+

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Dr. John Pappas

Peace Healthcare at Lions Center

S & S Electric, Inc.

Scarpelli Funeral Home

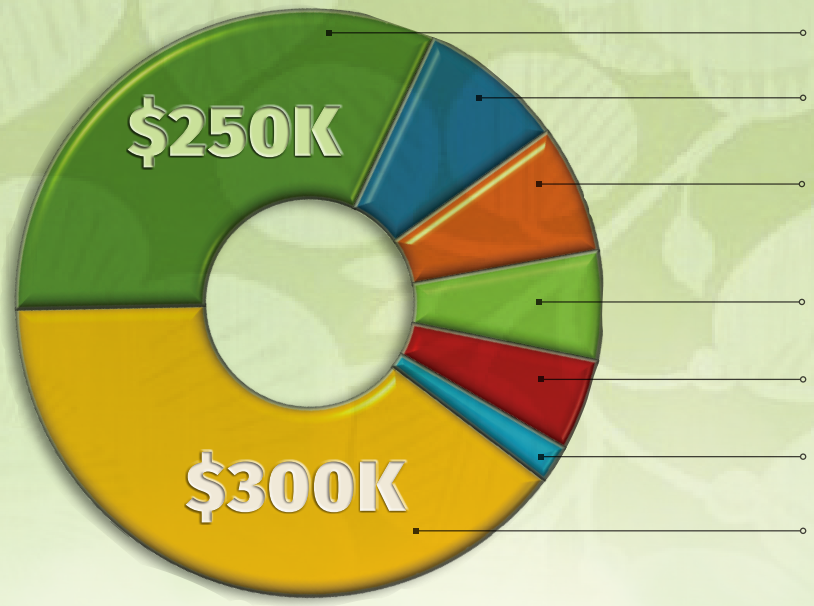
TWR Communications

Dr. Jonathan Walburn

Something to feel good about!

The Good We Do *Thanks to You!*

Annual Contribution to UPMC and Community: $770,900.00



Center for Hope and Healing, **32%**

Other support, **8%**

Wolfe Fund distribution for healthcare and educational charities in Allegany County, **7%**

Healthcare Scholarships, **6%**

Direct patient assistance for those in need, **5%**

Healthcare Heroes & staff support, **2%**

Palliative Care, **39%**

"I want to thank the WMHS Foundation for assisting so many patients in need in our community. I don't think people know how many ways the Foundation steps in, behind the scenes, to help those who are struggling. I am proud to be associated with such meaningful work, and I am grateful for each story Karen shares with her board. It gives us such a sense of the difference we all make!"

— Larry Boggs
president/founder
Boggs & Company Wealth Management

*"It's wonderful to be back in the community where I grew up. We continue to love and care for Western Maryland and are delighted to join the Foundation's **Circles of Giving** to support what matters to this community.*

My partner, Ron Bryant, was a patient for many weeks in 2021 and well into 2022. He continues to feel UPMC Western Maryland is a wonderful hospital with very caring staff."

— Elaine Solomon, Foundation friend

You Don't Have to Be Rich to be Generous.

YOU can make a real difference!

Leave a legacy without affecting your current budget at all. You and your financial planner determine what you feel comfortable sharing. Then we work with you to match your charitable intentions with real needs here at UPMC Western Maryland, from scholarships to healthcare technology to care for the poor.

Give us a call today to get started! 240-964-8003 or wmfoundation@upmc.edu.

Something to feel good about!

Impacts - UPMC Western Maryland

2022 Numbers

$14 Million

in complimentary healthcare to patients in need.

5,000

Surgeries performed.

33,000

Emergency Department visits.

9,000

Patients admitted.

700

Babies born.

$700 Million

Annual economic impact.

"My wonderful wife Sharon was diagnosed with Stage 4 ovarian cancer in 2016. She was given six months to a year. But through the Schwab Family Cancer Center and Dr. Zaman, we got almost five years. Miraculously, my blood disorder went into remission so that I could care for her. As I brought her in for treatment, we would get to know some of the other patients and witness the needs around us.

Sharon and I could afford our medical care, but there are people that can't – who are faced with a choice between buying groceries or paying rent. In honoring Sharon, I've been able to ease a bit of pain for these patients by personally raising funds for the cancer center.

The Schwab Family Cancer Center – you can't beat it anywhere. The nurses here are family... my family."

— Ray King, Schwab Family Cancer Center patient and donor

Contact Us! WMHS Foundation

Karen Johnson
Chief Development Officer

Lisa Hout
Senior Development Officer

Sharon Cosgrove
Marketing Communications Manager

Amanda Morris
Development Coordinator

Sandy Lippold
Executive Assistant II

Scan the code to the left for more information about the WMHS Foundation.

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