

HOME CARE
HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE
ISABELLA & MENORAH CENTERS FOR
REHABILITATION AND NURSING CARE
ELDERPLAN/HOMEFIRST
INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION IN
PALLIATIVE CARE

MJHS *in* FOCUS

Spring 2021

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Thank you to all of our 2020 donors. Without you, we would have not been able to provide many of the extraordinary programs and services that make such a difference in the lives of our patients and their families. Throughout this issue you will see the names listed in recognition of our supporters.

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FROM STROKE TO RECOVERY

How an Elderplan/HomeFirst member recuperated effectively from a stroke, **thanks to the coordinated care** he received from across MJHS Health System.





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FROM STROKE TO RECOVERY

Bob became a member of Elderplan/HomeFirst back in 2015. At the time, he had multiple health conditions: heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's and depression, along with prostate cancer. Despite his numerous health issues over the next four years, **his Care Management team always made sure Bob received the care he needed so he could remain safely in his Bronx home.**

But in 2019, Bob had a stroke and was hospitalized. He was left with weakness on one side of his body and was no longer able to walk or conduct activities

of daily living without assistance. It would not be safe for him to return directly home. So, when it was time for him to be discharged, the hospital's Social Worker offered him a choice of rehab centers. Bob chose Isabella Center because, like Elderplan, it is part of MJHS Health System. Bob told his Elderplan Care Manager that knowing there was a connection between the two organizations made him feel more comfortable. His Care Manager told him that the familiarity would also make it easier for the two teams to work together to coordinate his care.

continued on next page

The Doctor (And Others) Will See You Now

Thanks to a generous grant of \$75,000 from TD Bank, seeing the doctor and other clinical professionals has a whole new meaning these days.

How It Started

March 2020 was an overwhelming month for everyone, but there were some bright spots. Mid-month, regulatory adjustments made by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) allowed us to roll out a telehealth program for our hospice and palliative care patients and begin offering virtual family visits to our nursing home residents. While New York was on lockdown, telehealth helped keep so many people connected.

How It's Going

Although we never stopped making home visits—even at the height of the pandemic—more than a year later, we still offer all homebound hospice patients access to the full spectrum of services available from our interdisciplinary team, including

virtual visits from doctors, nurses, social workers, music therapists and pastoral care providers. We do this because telehealth visits give some the peace of mind that comes from knowing that their loved one is being cared for without a greater risk of exposure.

Here are some of the other ways our hospice and palliative care clinicians have been using telehealth visits:

- Certify and recertify hospice eligibility
- Readmit patients who need to resume our care
- Conduct palliative care consultations between physicians or nurse practitioners and patients with their families
- Provide music therapy

Bob Gets On The Road To Recovery

The caring and professional staff at Isabella Center worked closely with Bob over the next 28 days, providing physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT) and social work support to help him regain his strength, fine motor skills and ability to adjust to any ongoing limitations he might have. By the time he was cleared to return home, Bob was pleased with the significant progress he had made. He was considerably stronger, able to move around with a rolling walker and take care of some of his personal needs with assistance.

A member of the Elderplan Transitional Care Team coordinated with the Social Worker at Isabella, Bob and his daughter to plan for his safe discharge. Since Bob would still require skilled nursing services—from a certified home health agency—his Elderplan Transitional Care Nurse discussed his provider options with him. Bob chose MJHS Home Care because it too is part of MJHS.

Bob's Transitional Care Nurse also arranged resumption of his Personal Care Worker (PCW), to assist him with bathing, dressing and meals until he was more fully recovered, helped reconcile his

medications and scheduled essential follow-up appointments with his physicians.

Once back home, the MJHS Home Care Team, under the supervision of a Registered Nurse, continued to provide PT and OT, while assisting Bob with understanding his new medications. And, to ensure his safety and well-being, **his Elderplan**

Care Management Team coordinated with MJHS Home Care and Bob's Primary Care Physician (PCP) to manage his numerous chronic conditions.

Within six months, Bob had regained most of his mobility and was able to live independently with PCW support. His pre-existing medical conditions were well under control and the numerous medications he required were properly managed.

Bob credits the dedicated involvement of his Elderplan Care Management Team—along with the fruitful collaboration between the Elderplan Transitional Care Team, Isabella Center and MJHS Health Home Care, with his successful recovery. “My decision to trust providers from within the MJHS Health System was what I hoped. I received great care every step of the way,” said Bob. ■

**Details and picture changed for member's privacy*

Bob told his Elderplan Care Manager that knowing there was a connection between the two organizations made him feel more comfortable.

“Telehealth has been a lifesaver for my patients, families and staff.... We’ve been able to connect more family members with their loved ones and we’ve been able to add additional support during our virtual visits, including formal family meetings. Contrary to what some people initially thought, telehealth enhances the care we provide and that means a better experience for patients, families and the clinical team.” — *MJHS Hospice Social Work Supervisor*

- Honor military veterans with special recognition ceremonies
- Provide spiritual care, including last rites, for Christian patients
- Provide bereavement support
- Educate and train staff

Screen Time with a Purpose

At the height of the pandemic, when onsite family visits were extremely rare, technology kept our nursing home residents connected with their loved ones. While in-person visits have now resumed, virtual visits continue to play an important role in maintaining these essential relationships. At the MJHS Centers for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care, we use tablets equipped with HIPAA-compliant technology to facilitate virtual visits.

From time to time, we also get the opportunity to ensure residents can participate in virtual milestone celebrations—ranging from birthdays and anniversaries to religious traditions and commemorative holidays. The special moment everyone experiences is beyond compare. In essence, screen time turns into joyous family time. ■



2020 EMPLOYEE GIVING CAMPAIGN

Every year our very own employees raise funds for the programs and services of MJHS! Thank you to our employees who not only give to us every day by caring for our community but also go above and beyond to donate funds to ensure we can continue caring for those in need.

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MJHS Health System Embarks On DEI initiative

MJHS Health System is fortunate to have a highly diverse team of health care professionals and staff that cares for an equally diverse patient, resident and member population.



After we, along with the nation, witnessed the horrific acts of racial injustice last year, the leadership and board of MJHS Health System realized we needed to take a look inward and made an unwavering commitment to advancing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI).

As a first step, and to guide our DEI efforts, MJHS Health System has embraced the following Vision and Commitments:

VISION

An MJHS Health System where diversity is viewed as our strength. Where all team members feel respected, valued and free to be their authentic selves. An MJHS where we all work together toward a singular goal of delivering patient-centered high-quality care that is equitable, fair, and delivered with compassion and respect.

COMMITMENTS

MJHS Health System is committed to:

- Ensuring that team members will be able to **see themselves in their leaders**, inclusive of the board

- Making the communities we care for **feel understood and respected**
- Reinforcing that it is the responsibility of every member of the MJHS team to **embrace/celebrate a culture of inclusion**
- Leading the path to change by **providing continuing education** and **making inclusion a core competency**
- Holding the organization and ourselves **accountable for fostering a culture of inclusion** and **tracking our performance** relative to industry standards and best practices
- Acknowledging that achieving a more inclusive environment will be a **source of great pride** to all who work here and **increase our attractiveness to potential candidates**

MJHS Health System is fully committed to taking the steps necessary to making our organization more diverse, equitable and inclusive. Our work has just begun. ■

2020 EMPLOYEE GIVING
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MJHS Institute For Innovation In Palliative Care Continues To Advance Our Commitment To Research And Education

Founded in 2014, the MJHS Institute for Innovation in Palliative Care continues to advance the Health System's commitment to educating professionals, advancing knowledge and innovating programs to support growth and quality. In the past year, the Institute has undertaken the following:

Research

- **With grants from the Donaghue Foundation,** Lara Dhingra, Ph.D. and colleagues from the MJHS Institute and LeadingAge New York have completed two "big data" studies focused on nursing homes. The first revealed that the appearance of Institutional Special Needs Plans (Medicare Advantage plans for people living in nursing homes) has not diminished the acceptance of hospice programs by nursing homes (*Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 2020). The second study, similar to some earlier studies, found that racial/ethnic minorities experience pressure ulcers more than non-Hispanic whites because minorities tend to live in nursing homes with poor outcomes.
- **With funding from The National Institutes of Health,** Helena Knotkova, Ph.D. and colleagues at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine are conducting a clinical trial that will determine whether neurostimulation of the brain, provided by a new at-home device with scalp electrodes, can slow the progress of Alzheimer's Disease.
- **With funding from MJHS Foundation,** Dr. Dhingra and Dr. Russell Portenoy, MD, Executive Director of the MJHS Institute, have worked with colleagues from the Hospice & Palliative Care Association of New York State and others to investigate factors that may be associated with poor use of hospice by New York State residents. The study has revealed the complexity of these factors and will provide a tool to help policymakers and educators.

Education

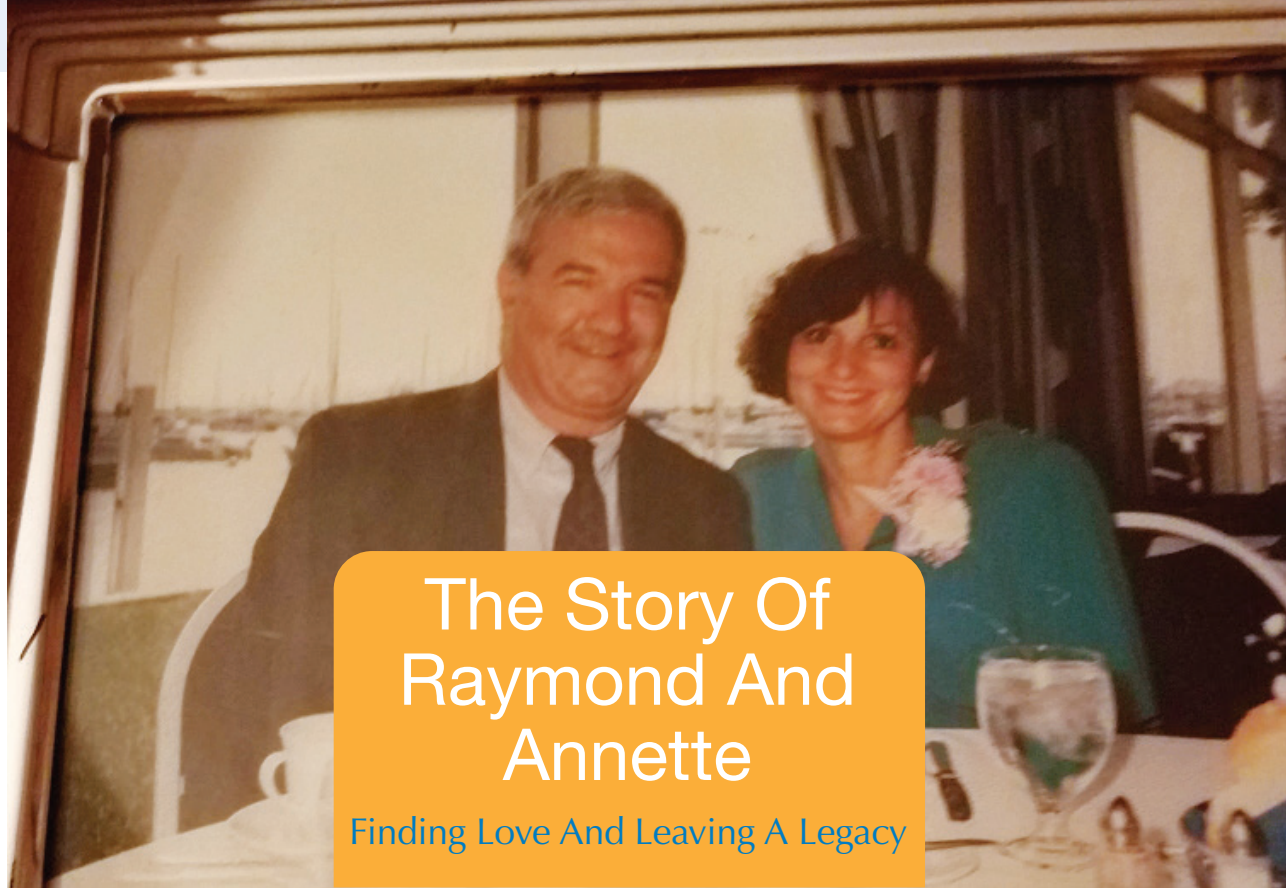
- **The New York Community Trust and the U.S. Cancer Pain Relief Committee** funded Myra Glajchen, D.S.W. and collaborators to create the first nationally-scaled program to educate front line social workers in palliative care best practices. The program—Educating Social Workers in Palliative and End-of-Life Care (ESPEC)—includes 8 hours of online training, 2 hours of instructor-led training, mentorship from a master trainer and train-the-trainer workshops. It will be distributed across the US by the National Association of Social Workers.
- **The 1199SEIU has funded** the development of a unique online training program for Certified Nursing Assistants in nursing homes. This program, created by the Institute, offers 8 hours of training in palliative care best practices and has been accessed by more than 750 CNAs so far. A similar program for nurses working in nursing homes has been completed and will be distributed soon.

New Program

- **With multi-year funding from the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation,** Dr. Dhingra and colleagues from five cystic fibrosis care centers around the country are implementing a novel approach to palliative care for children and adults with cystic fibrosis. ■

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Dara Marsh



The Story Of Raymond And Annette

Finding Love And Leaving A Legacy

Annette and I were a true love story. We met in 1985, at a continuing summer education program for the financial industry held at a Midwestern college. Both of us were divorced, and we both attended the program for three years before we finally started dating. For me it was like coming out of the dark ages. She was my Renaissance. Before I met Annette, I could be abrupt. She made me a better person.



During the summer of 2016, when we were living in the Midwest, she went to her physician complaining about bloating and difficulty eating. As I've since learned is all too common, he ignored these critical symptoms. It wasn't until Annette and I moved back to New York that she was diagnosed with Stage 3 Ovarian Cancer. She was treated for the cancer and we were able to pursue our dream of buying a love nest back in Chicago. Sadly, we were never able to use it.

Our plans were interrupted during the summer of 2019 when Annette had a mild stroke. In reviewing her scans, the doctors noticed a slight blemish, but nothing definitive. She was monitored closely and seven months later we got the devastating news—Annette had a malignant brain tumor. While the tumor

was removed, her follow up treatment was interrupted by COVID and her cancer spread. By mid-July, her suffering was just too great. I took her to the Emergency Room, and she was admitted. Four

days into her hospitalization, Annette said she wanted to start hospice care. I really didn't know what hospice care was. But Annette told me she wanted to die at home. How could I say no?

The day before Annette was scheduled to be discharged from the hospital, her lungs and abdomen needed to be drained

one more time. While she was at the procedure, I told a member of the hospital staff that Annette wanted hospice care. He recommended MJHS Hospice, and I'm so grateful he did.

"Annette and I received amazing care and support from MJHS Hospice for six weeks. On what was clearly going to be her last day, Annette's social worker was there for us, well mostly me."

2020 EMPLOYEE GIVING CAMPAIGN



I called MJHS and a member of the hospice team was at our home in less than 48 hours. From the onset, everyone at MJHS helped make the unbearable, bearable. They explained everything and helped alleviate some of my fear. Her nurse, Sydney, was so sweet and gentle. She came 2-3 times a week to drain her lungs and stomach. And Yanick, her social worker, was there for us both. Meredith, the music therapist, came with her guitar and played Annette's favorite songs. It was so calming. So were the visits from Kim her MJHS Chaplain. And one weekend, when Annette was having trouble breathing, I called for help. I couldn't believe it...a member of the team was there in less than 45 minutes.

Annette and I received amazing care and support from MJHS Hospice for six weeks. On what was clearly going to be her last day, Annette's social worker was there for us, well, mostly me. And the Chaplain came to administer last rights. I'm not religious, but I know it meant the world to Annette and that was all that mattered. Since she passed, MJHS has continued to be there. The bereavement support they provide has been a huge source of comfort. I can't tell you just how much I appreciate the difference the whole team has made for us. They were our Angels.

MJHS Hospice is so good and can give so much comfort and relief to people. I realized that I was in position to support MJHS, so their hospice program can make a difference for so many others. I experienced firsthand what MJHS did. The nurses and social workers visited late on a Saturday night: who does that anymore?



While I came from Hell's Kitchen, I did okay financially. My two children are grown and very successful in their own right. So, I can use some of my money to make a difference for others who aren't in the same circumstance as I am.

Annette and I were never able to have children together or to enjoy that love nest. And we both knew I could never go there without her. When we agreed to sell it, Annette made me promise not to keep the money from the house. She wanted me to give it to her grandchildren, nieces and nephews, as well as MJHS and another organization dedicated to raising awareness of ovarian cancer.

So, after she passed, I gave to the MJHS Circle of Caring, as a way of honoring Annette's memory while at the same time acknowledging her amazing nurse and social worker. Then I started to make a recurring monthly gift. The amount is not huge, but it adds up and I like the feeling of continuing to help. In fact, after COVID settles down, I hope to become an MJHS Hospice volunteer. And, when the house is finally sold, and I receive my distribution from the 911 Victims Compensation Fund, I have planned a more substantial donation to support MJHS Hospice and the extraordinary difference the team makes for every patient and family that entrusts them with their care.

I am so blessed to have had Annette in my life. She was so very special and changed me for the better in so many ways. Not only did she fill me with love, but she softened some of my rough edges and, I guess, even turned me into a bit of a philanthropist. ■

"Annette was a very loveable person and Raymond was clearly struggling knowing that he was going to lose the love of his life. Annette's social worker and I went above and beyond for her... actually, for them both. Normally we teach the family how to do the draining, when needed, but it was too much for Raymond to handle. So, I made nursing visits multiple times a week to support them both. Our social worker also visited often to provide peace-of-mind. It was our honor to help this wonderful couple." — Sydney, Annette's nurse.

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A Virtual Taste Of Success

"I am the sole income-earner in my household, and I was in jeopardy of losing my job until the MJHS Golden Family STAR program awarded me with additional home health aid support to care for my mother. Now I can go to work on time and provide for my family."

Providing support for caregivers is often overlooked, but at MJHS we recognize this is a critical part of caring for hospice patients. The MJHS Golden Family STAR program addresses this challenge by raising funds for additional Home Health Aide hours for families in crisis. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and support from our donors, we have been able to raise funds to provide additional support to families in crisis.

The MJHS Women's Council annual wine tasting plays a critical role in raising funds for these hours. But when COVID forced the cancellation of all in-person events, we had no choice but to take it virtual. And it was a resounding success.

Supporters were sent an invitation to join wine expert Mike Esposito, VP of Sales at Golden Ram Imports, and Somm School Insider host Carole Mac, for an informative and fun virtual get-together. Three bottles of Portuguese wine were then sent to the homes of attendees. Mike took us on a journey



through Portugal as he shared personal stories from his visits of wineries, noting the flavor profiles and nuances of each region. Carole then taught us to "taste like a sommelier," through her game Acids v. Tannins.

Thanks to the generosity of the sponsors of our virtual wine tasting, Golden

Ram Imports, Wine 4 Food, Sylvia Golden, and LI Script, along with all those who supported the evening, over 2,000 additional Home Health Aide hours will be provided to families in crisis experiencing caregiver burnout or distress.



Now that's something to toast about!

If you are interested in being part of our next virtual wine tasting or supporting caregivers, contact the Foundation at (212) 356-5300 or email events@mjhsfoundation.org ■

Wedding Bells And World News Tonight



When Robyn Roberts and Timothy Williams set their wedding date, they never imagined a global pandemic would upend their plans or that their story would melt America's heart. Determined to find a way to include 89-year-old Dorothy Roberts, who is mother of the bride, Robyn and Tim asked to use Isabella Center's courtyard as their wedding venue. On October 10, 2020, Mrs.

Roberts, a 13-year Isabella resident, was there for her daughter. Once we shared the gorgeous photos on social media, they seemed to uplift and bring much needed joy to so many people across the country. Soon thereafter, *ABC World News Tonight with David Muir* reached out. On October 20, 2020, the newscast celebrated the extraordinary wedding during their "America Strong" segment. ■

Honoring Loved Ones while Supporting Vital Services

A memorial fund is a charitable fund established to accept donations in memory of a loved one who has passed. It is a personal way to honor their legacy while having a meaningful impact on the care we provide.

Starting a Memorial Fund with MJHS

At MJHS we have many programs and services that need ongoing support so we can continue to provide them to our community. Some of these include Creative Arts Therapy, Caregiver Support, Dementia Care and Pastoral Care, to name a few. Start by choosing one that speaks to you and that you feel is close to your heart.

After you have chosen an area of care to focus on, you invite others to join you in honoring your loved one with a gift in their name. Some families choose to do this yearly on their loved one's birthday or anniversary of their passing. The cadence is up to you, but whatever funds you raise will be restricted to the program you've chosen.

Currently MJHS Foundation is home to extra ordinary funds that have supported many vital programs and services.

Meet Judy. As a way to honor her late husband Jerry, she chose to create a fund dedicated to supporting family caregivers. Since starting the Jerry Gold Memorial Fund in 2017, Judy's friends and family have generously donated over \$45,000, which has provided almost 2,000 hours of Hospice Home Health Aide care to support family caregivers experiencing burnout or distress.

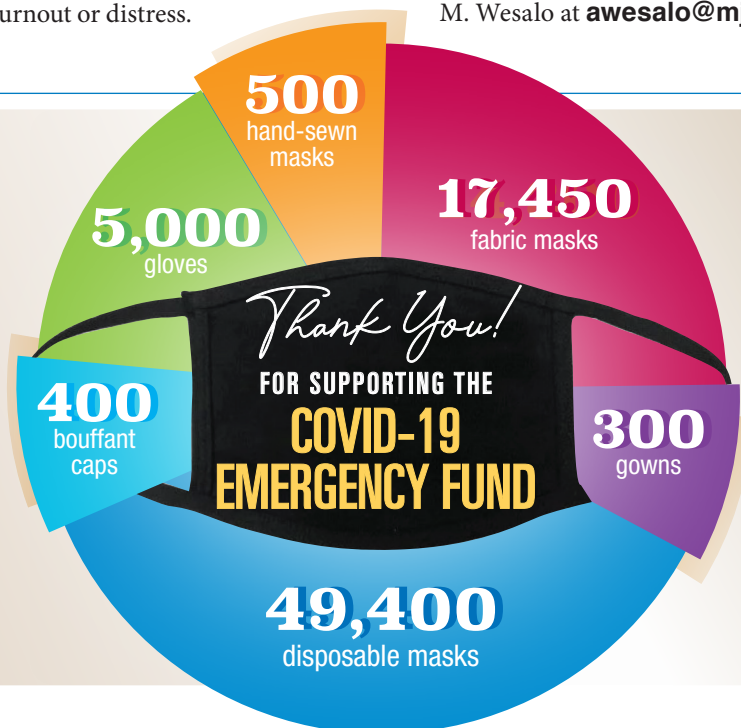
For Trish, it was her positive experience with the Medical Ethics Committee that compelled her to establish the Philip Littman Memorial Fund for Medical Ethics. Her husband, Phil, was a doctor committed to caring for his patients. When his ALS progressed, he and Trish needed help navigating their options. The ethics committee helped them through the challenging questions. By establishing a Fund, Trish felt there was no better way to honor her husband's legacy. To date, the fund has raised over \$18,000 to support the committee's important work and we will soon recognize the fifth anniversary of Phil's passing with a memorial mailing.

These memorial funds have been critical in helping MJHS continue to go above and beyond for our patients and their families. Creating a named fund also gives families the opportunity to celebrate the legacy of a loved one while having a lasting impact for years to come.

We are with you every step of the way

Our Foundation will support you every step of the way—from assisting you in creating letters and emails to drafting the message for your network.

If you are interested in memorializing your loved one with a named fund, please reach out to Allison M. Wesalo at awesalo@mjhs.org ■



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FOUNDERS SOCIETY

The 1907 Founders Society joins together our most dedicated philanthropic partners to help further the mission of MJHS. With a minimum annual contribution of \$1,000,* members receive invitations to special events and programs with access to meet MJHS Executives, recognition on the Foundation website and in the MJHS in Focus Newsletter and more. For information on how to join, please email Allison M. Wesalo, awesalo@mjhs.org.

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**Minimum contribution is based on annual, non-event related contributions to the MJHS Foundation. Pledges are listed by the full amount in the year the commitment was made.*



Social distancing didn't stop these past and new event sponsors and attendees from coming together to support our mission. From our Wine Tasting that went virtual to our fall appeal, we are grateful for your continued generosity. For information on how to join this distinguished group, please email Allison M. Wesalo, awesalo@mjhs.org.

To see our 2020 Circle of Caring Members, or to make a special gift in honor of an MJHS clinician, visit mjhsfoundation.org/circle or call the Foundation at **(212) 356-5300**. ■

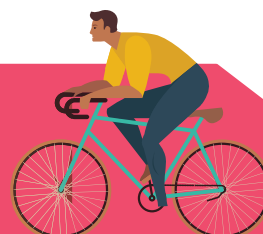


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2021 Events Calendar



YOU'RE INVITED

Each year, MJHS Foundation hosts a wide range of events to support the mission of MJHS Health System. Not only do these events help us raise funds toward our mission but they provide an opportunity to get together, thank our supporters and show them first-hand the difference they make—and, have a little fun.

Below is a list of upcoming events. If you would like to join us, call us at **(212) 356-5300** or visit our website mjhsfoundation.org/events

On The Move Virtual Challenge June 19 | **Live Event Meets Virtual Challenge**

Run, walk, bike or set a goal of your choice to help support the patients of MJHS.

Golf Classic October 4 | **Live Play**

Hit the golf course this fall in support of the underfunded programs and services provided to our community.

Wine Tasting October 14 | **Virtual Event**

100% of proceeds will go to the MJHS Golden Family STAR program, which is dedicated to **supporting family caregivers whose loved one is receiving hospice care** from MJHS Hospice.

