

# Mercy Hospital Foundation Connections

News and announcements for donors, patients, and their families.

Spring 2018



## It's That Special Mercy Touch!



Pictured above are, (l.-r.), Dr. Henry Meltser; Patti Sedar; Jennifer Bardrof; and Dr. Aravind Herle.

In celebration of Heart Month in February, Jennifer Bardrof, a 35-year-old mother and Buffalo school teacher, recently had the opportunity to reunite with two Mercy Hospital cardiologists who helped save her life when a virus began attacking her heart in the spring of 2016. Today, she is enjoying a full recovery that includes running as a favorite pastime and spending much-appreciated time with her husband Jeremy and two young daughters, Madelyn, 6, and Addison, 4.

Her heart story began in May 2016 when she was stricken with severe flu-like symptoms that sent her to the emergency department at the Mercy Ambulatory Care Center (MACC) in Orchard Park. After showing signs of heart failure, she was immediately transferred to Mercy Hospital.

According to Aravind Herle, MD, Chief of Cardiology at Mercy Hospital, an echocardiogram revealed that her heart was functioning at 15%. "She had no coronary artery blockages and no history of heart disease. She was very sick and looked like someone who was losing life quickly." Bardrof's "flu-like symptoms" was actually myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart muscle that was causing heart failure.

Acting quickly, Mercy Hospital interventional cardiologist Henry Meltser, MD, implanted an Impella pump to stabilize her heart function while Dr. Herle contacted the University of Rochester

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Physicians, nurses and hospital staff of the Mercy Hospital Intensive Care Unit (ICU), pictured above, were proud to be recognized with the national Beacon Award for Excellence in patient care.

## Mercy's ICU Earns Prestigious Beacon Award

The Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Mercy Hospital of Buffalo has earned the Beacon Award for Excellence presented by the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN). The award recognizes the nation's highest performing hospital patient care units for excellence in professional practice, patient care and clinical outcomes.

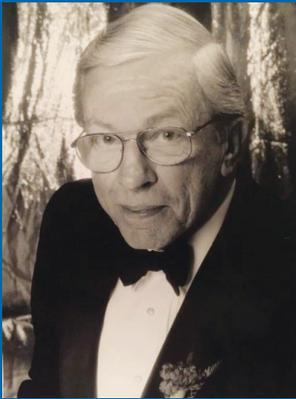
"We are extremely proud of our ICU nursing team for achieving this prestigious honor," said Shari McDonald, RN, MSN, Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer. "This award not only recognizes our exceptional staff, but demonstrates our commitment to providing our patients with the highest quality care available."

The Beacon Award acknowledges hospital units and their nursing teams who consistently set the standard for excellence in patient care. To be eligible for the award, hospital units must meet defined criteria in the following categories: Leadership Structures and Systems; Appropriate Staffing and Staff Engagement; Effective Communication, Knowledge Management and Learning Development; Evidence-Based Practice and Processes; and Outcome Measurements.

AACN President Christine Schulman, MS, RN, CNS, CCRN-K, applauds the commitment of Mercy's ICU team for working together to meet and exceed the high standards. "The Beacon Award recognizes caregivers in stellar units whose consistent and systematic approach to evidence-based care optimizes patient outcomes," she explains.

The Beacon Award includes progressive bronze, silver and gold recognition levels, which represent ongoing efforts to continually improve patient care.

## A Heartfelt Legacy of Caring



*Dr. Milford C. Maloney,  
March 15, 1927 – Feb. 9, 2018*

Dr. Milford C. Maloney put his heart into everything he did in life. He was an accomplished cardiologist, chemist, athlete, as well as dedicated husband and father.

His service and leadership at Mercy Hospital of Buffalo stands as one of Dr. Maloney's most notable contributions to Western New York. He was named the hospital's Chief of Medicine in 1969 and served as the director of its medical residency training program for 18 years.

Dr. Maloney was also a forward thinking physician who established a life insurance policy with Mass Mutual to benefit the Mercy Hospital Foundation. Dr. Maloney passed on February 9, 2018 at the age of 90.

His thoughtful gift to the Mercy Hospital Foundation ensures his life and legacy of caring for patients will live on.

What if you could make a meaningful financial gift, at no cost to you now, that advances Mercy's mission and ministry? Planned gifts, such as bequests, gifts of stock, retirement assets, cash, or insurance, are a progressive way of demonstrating your commitment to the patients and families helped and healed by Mercy Hospital.

Won't you remember the Mercy Hospital Foundation as your charity of choice in your will, trust, or estate or name us as a beneficiary of your IRA or insurance plan, like Dr. Maloney?

If you have included Mercy Hospital Foundation in your will, insurance, or estate plan, please contact us by calling 716-828-2038. We would like to thank you and recognize you for your gift. For more information on planned gifts, please visit [www.chsbuffalo.org/FCH/Mercy/WaystoGive](http://www.chsbuffalo.org/FCH/Mercy/WaystoGive).

## Congratulations to our Daisy Award Winners

Mercy Hospital was pleased to present its 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Daisy Awards to **Pamela Kabzinski, RN**, from the 5 McAuley West Unit, and **Jill Syracuse, RN**, from the 5 East Unit.



*Pamela Kabzinski, center, celebrates her award with co-workers.*

The DAISY Award, which recognizes extraordinary nurses, was established by the National DAISY Foundation in memory of J. Patrick Barnes who died at 33 of ITP, an auto-immune disease. DAISY is an acronym for Diseases Attacking the Immune System.

Today, over 2300 hospitals across the county participate in the program.

Anybody, including patients and families, can nominate a nurse for the award. Nomination forms can be found in the lobby Daisy display table, surgical waiting room, nurses stations, and cafeteria.

## New PT Service for Back and Neck Pain

Catholic Health's Partners in Rehab has introduced a new comprehensive Spine Care Program that offers specialized treatment for patients with back and neck pain.

Patients will be cared for by physical therapists who have advanced training and certification in the treatment of the spine. Catholic Health associates covered by First Choice insurance can waive their co-pay for this PT service at Partners in Rehab sites. Patients can also be treated without physician referral for up to 30 days.



*Physical therapist Joe Lorenzetti, consults with Denise Kulkoleca.*

This program is offered at the Mercy Diagnostic Treatment Center in West Seneca, the MACC in Orchard Park, and the Mercy Diagnostic Center in East Aurora.

## Feeling the Effects of Flu

**Dr. Kevin Shiley, MD**, Infectious Disease Consultant, was interviewed by Channel 7 News reporter Josh Bazan in January about a spike in influenza cases seen throughout Catholic Health and temporary Visitor Restrictions that were implemented.



## Keeping Blood Pressure in Check at the DMV

As part of American Heart Month in February, Mercy Hospital and Erie County Clerk Mickey Kearns teamed up to offer free blood pressure screenings at auto bureaus throughout the county.

“Our goal as one of the largest hospitals in the area and a partner in this “Healthy Heart” Auto Bureau Screening program is to help make our community healthier by reducing the prevalence of heart disease and stroke,” said C.J. Urlaub, President and CEO of Mercy Hospital. “We feel it was a unique idea to reach people in the non-traditional setting of a busy DMV office.”



County Clerk Mickey Kearns kicks off the screening program with Wendy Harbison.

Heart disease remains the leading cause of death in Erie County and high blood pressure is a risk factor that often has no symptoms.

Special thanks to **Maria Dee**, Operations Coordinator at Mercy Hospital, who helped organize the program, and all the Mercy Hospital nurses who participated.

## Keeping Babies Safe at Car Seat Safety Check

Catholic Health and Mercy Hospital, in conjunction with State Senator Timothy Kennedy, Safe Kids WNY, and EPIC, hosted a free Car Seat Safety Check at the hospital in December. With a focus on keeping babies safe and raising awareness for a recently approved NYS car seat law, the event was a success with over 100 car seats checked and 80 new car seats donated through a grant from the Safe Kids Buckle-Up program.



Pictured with Senator Timothy Kennedy, far right, at the Car Seat Check were volunteers, I.-r., Erie County Sheriff Deputies Chris Soluri and Simon Biegasiewicz; NYS Trooper Gerald Pacillo; Aimee Gomlak, VP of Catholic Health Women's Services; and Deputy Aaron Naegely.

Senator Kennedy was a co-sponsor of a new state law that will require all children riding in a car, who are younger than two years old, be in

a rear-facing car seat as an added safety measure. The law takes effect in November 2019.

## AstraZeneca Grant Helps Fight Heart Disease

The AstraZeneca Healthcare Foundation, *Connections for Cardiovascular Health*<sup>SM</sup> (CCH), has awarded another \$100,000 grant to the Mercy Hospital Foundation to continue second-year funding for the *Heart Smart for Life* free community wellness program based at the Mercy Comprehensive Care Center (MCCC) in Buffalo, NY.



Heart Smart Program leaders, I.-r., Kathy Swenson, Jeanne O'Hara, Kathy Bragagnola, Ann Marie Smokowski, and Terry Bianchi celebrate their grant award.

Mercy Foundation Executive Director **Kathy Swenson** and Heart Smart Director **Jeanne O'Hara**

participated in a National CCH Learning Forum in December.

## Sharing Lessons Learned from Heart Smart for Life



Heart Smart for Life team members and webinar presenters, I.-r., Dietician Ann Marie Smokowski, Clinical Associate Professor, D'Youville College School of Pharmacy, Stephanie R. Brian, Director and MCCC Manager Jeanne O'Hara, Mercy Hospital Foundation Executive Director Kathy Swenson, Social Worker Kathy Bragagnola, and Director Neuroscience Clinical Services at Mercy Hospital of Buffalo Nancy Stoll.

In March, the Mercy Hospital Foundation and Mercy Comprehensive Care Center (MCCC) shared lessons learned, tips and tools, and engagement tactics from the Heart Smart for Life program during a webinar hosted by the Population Health Collaborative.

The presentation were provided by **James W. Blasetto, MD, MPH, FACC**, Chairman of the AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation, *Connections for Cardiovascular Health*<sup>SM</sup>, **Jeanne O'Hara**, Heart Smart for Life Director & Mercy Comprehensive Care Center Manager, **Ann Marie Smokowski, RD, CDE, CDN**, Heart Smart for Life Dietician, **Kathy Bragagnola, LMSW**, Heart Smart for Life Social Worker, **Stephanie R. Brian, Pharm.D., BCPS**, Clinical Associate Professor, D'Youville College School of Pharmacy, **Nancy Stoll, RN**, Director Neuroscience Clinical Services at Mercy Hospital of Buffalo, and **Kathy Swenson, M.S., CFRE**, Mercy Hospital Foundation Executive Director.

Heart Smart for Life is a grant funded wellness program focused on improving the underlying causes of heart disease for high-risk patients and residents. The program is a collaborative initiative aimed at ensuring vulnerable populations – those who otherwise might fall through the cracks – have access to nutrition education, biometric health screenings, wellness programs, and other resources resolute on preventing heart disease.

Program measurements and outcomes include improvements in physical activity, healthy eating, and knowledge of cardiovascular health and nutrition, as well as improvements in clinical measures such as blood pressure, Body Mass Index, and cholesterol levels. Heart Smart for Life is measurable, successful, and improving lives.

You can view the webinar at [www.chsbuffalo.org/foundations/mercy-hospital/patient-stories](http://www.chsbuffalo.org/foundations/mercy-hospital/patient-stories) and click on the link Heart Smart for Life Program – PHC Webinar: Learn how you and your healthcare team can start your own program. For more information please call 716-923-6152.

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Jennifer Bardrof pictured with her husband and two daughters.

Medical Center (URMC) that operates the only Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Center in Upstate New York, regarding the next steps for the care that Bardrof needed to survive.

Bardrof was flown to URMC's Strong Memorial Hospital where the ECMO (Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation) team was able to stabilize her organ function. ECMO uses a machine, similar to a heart-lung bypass machine, to pump and oxygenate a patient's blood outside the body, allowing the heart and lungs to rest.

"If the team at Mercy Hospital hadn't implanted the Impella pump, Jennifer wouldn't have lived long enough for us to be able to help her," said URMC Cardiac Surgery Chief Sunil Prasad, M.D.

Bardrof spent over a month at Strong Memorial under the watchful eyes and support of her family. Her parents, Patti and

Mike Sedar, are both nurses and Patti works at Mercy Hospital.

When she returned to Buffalo under the attentive care of Dr. Herle, Bardrof knew she had a long road to recovery. "Step by step, I regained my strength...I wanted my normal life back and even dreamed of running again," she said. "With stress tests and ongoing monitoring, I gradually began walking then running short distances."

A year later, Bardrof successfully ran the Buffalo Half Marathon which marked her one-year anniversary of being airlifted to Rochester. She also went on to run the Buffalo Turkey Trot at Thanksgiving.

"I have so much to be grateful for," Bardrof said. "The doctors and healthcare teams at the MACC, Mercy Hospital and Strong Memorial Hospital saved my life and I thank all of them from the bottom of my healed and happy heart."