Baby Boom
Wall-Breaking Ceremony Kicks Off Construction on $10 Million State-of-the-Art Newborn Care Center at Sinai

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD ROCKY DAVIS SPENT THE FIRST 104 DAYS OF HIS LIFE STRUGGLING TO THRIVE IN THE NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (NICU) AT SINAI HOSPITAL.

But—judging by the way he can swing a sledgehammer—you would never know it.

Davis was one of five children—all alumni or siblings of the Jennifer Gandel Kachura NICU—invited to don a hard hat and swing a toy sledgehammer as part of the December 4th wall-breaking ceremony that kicked off construction of the new Newborn Care Center in the Herman & Walter Samuelson Children’s Hospital at Sinai.

Expected to open in January 2021, the $10 million Newborn Care Center will dramatically overhaul the infant care facilities at Samuelson Children’s Hospital—expanding them, enhancing them, and giving providers the state-of-the-art environment they need to deliver the latest care to all newborns, including premature and critically ill babies.

“Our current infant care facilities were built in 1981, and they have been the first home to so many of our tiniest patients,” explains former Sinai Hospital president Jonathan Ringo, M.D., who was instrumental in getting the project off the ground before his departure. “But this expansion marks the beginning of a new era for infant care in our community, especially those families who need a higher and more complex level of care.”

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The heart of the Newborn Care Center will be the overcrowded Janelle Gandel-Kachauer NICU, a Level III 21-bed NICU that will be three times larger than its predecessor. While the current NICU is consistently ranked among the best in Maryland (see sidebar), growing patient demand—and rapidly advancing technology—have made the renovation and expansion a welcome arrival.

“The newly renovated NICU will mark a step forward not just for LifeBridge Health, but for the science of neonatal care.”

“Every five years, we are visited by the State of Maryland to maintain our designation as a Neonatal and Perinatal Specialty Referral Center—and every visit we are given a letter of commendation as a center of excellence,” notes Thomas O’Brien, M.D., medical director of newborn services at Sinai and chief of the Ellen W.P. Wasserman Division of Neonatology. “But [the State reviewers] always ask, ‘When are you going to get a new NICU so that the facility you work in can match the quality of care that you provide?’ Well, that day has arrived!”

The newly renovated NICU will mark a step forward not just for LifeBridge Health, but for the science of neonatal care. Research demonstrates that NICU babies benefit from the stimulation of an open bay unit, but they also need privacy to recover during crucial times. As such, the NICU is designed around an innovative new hybrid formula, situating some private rooms in community clusters to ensure accessibility, stimulation, and privacy in one setting. Five overnight stay rooms, including a dedicated twin room, will allow parents to spend the night in the same room as their NICU baby to strengthen parent-child bonding.

The overnight rooms were something that the NICU Parents’ Council—a group involved in co-founding member Keith Atrens, Dr. Thomas O’Brien, and Dr. Jennifer Rengo.

THE NEWBORN CARE CENTER CAMPAIGN Naming Opportunities

There are many naming opportunities—ranging from $25,000 to $2 million, nursing stations to infant pods—now available as part of The Campaign for the Newborn Care Center. Create a legacy for your family or organization, and help us care for our community’s littlest patients, with a gift to the campaign today.

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY GIVEN SO GENEROUSLY. Ellen W.P. Wasserman, Division of Neonatology
Sina Mintzvald Foundation, NICU Family Lounge
The Atrens Family of Acme Paper & Supply Co., Family Room for Twins
The Applebaum and Cuyler Families, Family Room for Single Babies
The Attman Family of Acme Paper & Supply Co., Family Room for Twins

MAKE A GIFT TODAY: Visit LifeBridgeHealth.org/Giving or call 410-601-GIFT (4438) to learn more and get started.

A LOOK AT Our Award-Winning NICU Team

Nearly 250 families turn to our NICU team each year. It’s a responsibility the team never takes lightly. Here are some of the ways we’re providing growing families with the highest level of care:

LIFE-SAVING LEADERSHIP

Our NICU consistently ranks among the top three NICUs in the state of Maryland on all of the most important outcomes that are reported. Through our life-saving measures, we’ve reduced Very Low Birth Weight (VLBW) infant mortality to 7 percent (versus the state rate of 10 percent). Survival without morbidity ranks 10 percent higher than the national average.

INNOVATION FOR BETTER OUTCOMES

We have received the Minogue Award from the Maryland Patient Safety Center for drawing placental blood in VLBW infants, a process change that reduces the incidence of head bleeds and lowers the need for early transfusions. Our leaders are invited to share this success at national conferences across the United States to advance the level of care at other facilities.

FIGHTING ADDICTION

In 2019, our neonatal program was recognized by the Vermont Oxford Network as a Center of Excellence in Education and Training for infants and families affected by neonatal abstinence syndrome (babies withdrawing from exposure to narcotics). Opiates, such as heroin and methadone, cause withdrawal in over half of babies exposed prenatally.

The NICU will also be equipped with the latest life-saving technologies— including convertible NICU beds with built-in warming devices, resuscitators, and respirators—to achieve the greatest outcomes possible.

Ultimately, the Newborn Care Center will be designed to make every family’s stay as comfortable as possible. Additional features will include a completely renovated well-baby nursery and exam rooms, an expanded NICU family lounge, state-of-the-art lactation services, a satellite pharmacy, and more.

Despite all the changes that are planned, there’s one thing that Stansbury believes will still feel very familiar after the dust settles: the team’s meaningful approach to care.

“I know from experience that this is a place that delivers not only exceptional medical care but also compassionate care for the whole person and the whole family,” she says. “The way the doctors and nurses support new parents, teach them what to expect, and walk them through the day-to-day of how to care for your child is very special, especially if you are a NICU parent. The Newborn Care Center will only take that specialness to the next level.”

WHY I GIVE

Michelle Stansbury’s Story

“In 2013, our son Mason was born at 26 weeks. He weighed 1 pound and 1 ounce. We were never guaranteed a single day with him, so my husband and I were extremely grateful for every minute we had with him. When Mason passed away at 30 days, we wanted to stay connected to the NICU because it was the only place he had ever called home. We always thought reading was so important, especially in the NICU where you are very limited in what you can do as a parent. So we started donating a book to every baby that was born. More and more people started to donate books as well and the one-book idea transformed into Mason’s Library. It’s filled with more than 500 books at any given time. We encourage parents to read them to their babies during their stay here, and then take them home and keep them as a treasured memory.

When our daughter, Avery, was born at Sinai in 2016, we had newborn pictures taken of her at Mason’s Library. It’s very special to know she feels connected to our mission and to her brother.

It was also important for us to be co-founding members of the NICU Parents’ Council—to do whatever we could to support the staff who cared for us and for all the families who walk through these doors. We do fundraising. We have family support programs that the Council fully funds. We’ve started a Journey Read program to help NICU families mark important milestones with keepsake beads.

When we had Mason, I was given some very good advice: I could look at my pain in a negative light or a positive one. If I chose positive, they explained, the best way to heal and grieve was to give back. To do something beyond myself. That’s why I’m involved. Giving back has provided me with incredible healing.”

JOIN MICHELLE IN GIVING BACK:

Visit LifeBridgeHealth.org/VolunteerWithLBH to learn how you can become a volunteer.
Audrey’s Boutique
Northwest Hospital Honors Audrey Lifcovich with Gift Shop Unveiling

On December 9, more than 50 friends, family members, and hospital staff and leaders gathered together to honor Lifcovich with the unveiling of Audrey’s Boutique, the newly renamed gift shop at Northwest Hospital. In total, Lifcovich has contributed 45 years and more than 83,000 hours as a hospital volunteer—overseeing the gift shop, serving as Northwest Hospital Auxiliary president since the 1980s, and sitting on the Northwest Hospital board of directors since 1994. In 2014, the United Way of Central Maryland honored Audrey with its Volunteer of a Lifetime award.

Under Lifcovich’s leadership, the Auxiliary has provided more than $7 million to major projects at Northwest Hospital, including the renovation of the Emergency Department, ongoing investments in new technologies, the expansion of the Emergency Department, and the addition of art therapy programs. “To say Audrey and the Northwest Hospital Auxiliary have been long-time partners of ours doesn’t seem sufficient enough,” says Paul Saval, Northwest Hospital’s chairman of the board. “I would say that Audrey is what exemplifies Northwest: community and family. She is our matriarch and we are so grateful for her.”

Off all her volunteer activities, managing the Northwest Hospital gift shop has been Lifcovich’s greatest labor of love. Together with her late husband, Mark, Lifcovich organized the shop’s activities, ran the day-to-day operations, and handled the purchasing and merchandising. The shop quickly grew from a traditional flowers-and-candy inventory into one of Randallstown’s favorite shopping destinations, offering hats, jewelry, handbags, clothes, and unexpected treasures. “Audrey and Mark would travel regularly to New York City, staying in New Jersey at the Days Inn to save money. Then they would drive in to Chinatown to hand-select purses, jewelry, and other novelties for the shop,” explains Leslie Simmons, executive vice president of LifeBridge Health. “And as customers became regulars and friends, Audrey and Mark shaped their purchasing decisions with them in mind. It’s easy to see why the shop attracted—and continues to attract—repeat customers from the community.”

That kind of devotion, Simmons points out, is something you don’t see every day. “As I learn more about Audrey and her legacy here at Northwest, I feel like I’m hearing a true love story,” Simmons says. “Audrey and Mark Lifcovich’s love and dedication to each other and, in return, their deep love and devotion for this community have inspired something truly magical.”

The day included a delicious brunch and silent auction, as well as the event’s signature Pink Couch talk, where community member Tracey Siedel and Carroll Hospital patient educator Trisha Wagman, R.N., shared their heartfelt experiences as breast cancer survivors. Siedel admitted that her journey through breast cancer and radiation therapy was filled with complex emotions and commended the hospital for its “phenomenal” care and support throughout. “With the Embrace Program (see below), I got my strength back. I’ve gotten to build new relationships and have conversations with ladies that are going through the same experience. It’s been very motivating,” Siedel remarked.

Guests also heard about current women’s health initiatives with Thu Nguyen, M.D., diagnostic imaging, from Presenting Sponsor Advanced Radiology, and Christie Ballas, M.D., chief of OB/GYN, from Capital Women’s Care, this year’s Empower Sponsor. Dona Hobart, M.D., breast surgeon and medical director of LifeBridge Health’s breast care centers, and Darlene Gabeau, M.D., Ph.D., medical director of radiation oncology at the William E. Kahlert Regional Cancer Center, chaired the event. “We were extremely pleased to have such overwhelming support for our breast care services from the community,” Dr. Hobart commented afterwards. “The turnout for the Pink Fling was amazing and I’m excited about how the funds raised will help us further advance our breast cancer services.”

Pink Fling
Brunch Raises More Than $70,000 for Breast Cancer Services

HELD AT MARTIN'S WESTMINSTER ON OCTOBER 19, CARROLL HOSPITAL'S 19TH ANNUAL PINK FLING DREW IN CLOSE TO 250 ATTENDEES AND RAISED MORE THAN $70,000 TO BENEFIT THE CENTER FOR BREAST HEALTH AND EMBRACE PROGRAM AT CARROLL HOSPITAL.

The day included a delicious brunch and silent auction, as well as the event’s signature Pink Couch talk, where community member Tracey Siedel and Carroll Hospital patient educator Trisha Wagman, R.N., shared their heartfelt experiences as breast cancer survivors. Siedel admitted that her journey through breast cancer and radiation therapy was filled with complex emotions and commended the hospital for its “phenomenal” care and support throughout. “With the Embrace Program (see below), I got my strength back. I’ve gotten to build new relationships and have conversations with ladies that are going through the same experience. It’s been very motivating,” Siedel remarked.

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SAVE THE DATE FOR PINK FLING 2020:
Saturday, October 24 at Legacy Hall–Sykesville Freedom District Fire Department.
Details at CarrollHospitalCenter.org/Pink-Fling.

About the Embrace Program

Developed by Carroll Hospital and made possible through generous support, the Embrace Program provides activities—including nutrition education, complementary health treatments, and fitness training—to help breast cancer survivors regain their strength physically, mentally, and spiritually after treatment ends. The program offers weekly meetings giving survivors a chance to connect with one another and build a support network beyond the hospital. Many participants in the program have formed lasting friendships through their shared experiences.

If you would like to support the program, please contact the Carroll Hospital Foundation at 410-871-6200 or CarrollFoundation@lifebridgehealth.org.
Carroll Golf Classic

Tournament Raises Nearly $175,000 in Net Proceeds

NEARLY $175,000 WAS RAISED FOR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AT CARROLL HOSPITAL DURING THE 29TH ANNUAL CARROLL GOLF CLASSIC HELD AT THE PINEY BRANCH GOLF CLUB ON SEPTEMBER 20.

Close to 200 golfers and more than 20 volunteers enjoyed a day on the course. The tournament included morning and afternoon flights for golfers, a special reception dinner for attendees, and an awards presentation to the day’s winning teams.

The event’s top prize—the 2019 Wampler Cup—went to Aaron Matty’s team for the second year in a row.

The team’s members were among the youngest recipients in the history of the tournament. The Wampler Cup is named in honor of the late Atlee Wampler, Jr., one of Carroll Hospital’s founding fathers.

The Carroll Hospital Foundation extends a special thanks to DPR Construction, the Golf Classic Tournament Sponsor for the fourth consecutive year.

The Carroll Hospital Foundation would also like to recognize the Baltimore Child Abuse Center, which has included selecting BCAC thank-you for his continued support of the organization’s symbol. The butterfly was handcrafted by BCAC children as a present for the day’s founding fathers.

HIT THE LINKS ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2020!
Register now for this fall’s Carroll Golf Classic. Sponsorship opportunities also available. Details at CarrollGolfClassic.org.

Baltimore Child Abuse Center

Community Gathering Offers Glimpse Into the Life of a Trauma Worker

What is it like to Care Bravely for Baltimore’s most vulnerable children? Guests got a better understanding during the Baltimore Child Abuse Center’s (BCAC) annual Community Gathering, held on February 28 at Sinai Hospital’s Zamoiski Auditorium.

During the living-room-style forum, BCAC professionals shared their stories of working on the frontlines, protecting children—including more than 1,800 children last year alone—from a lifetime of trauma every day. Special guest speaker Senator Chris Van Hollen was presented with a keepsake butterfly, the organization’s symbol. The butterfly was handcrafted by BCAC children as a thank-you for his continued support of the center, which has included selecting BCAC as Maryland’s honoree for the 2019 congressional Angels in Adoption Award.

Senator Chris Van Hollen with Kerry Hannan, BCAC’s Director of Forensic Services, and Murray, BCAC’s specially trained facility dog. Murray provides comfort to victims of child abuse before and during forensic interviews and medical appointments.

The Carroll Hospital Foundation

COVID-19 Response

Community Rallies Behind NEW Fund to Support Frontline Responders

AS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC TAKES OVER OUR DAY-TO-DAY LIVES, SINAI HOSPITAL BOARD MEMBER ANDREW LEVINE CAN’T HELP BUT IMAGINE WHAT DAILY LIFE IS LIKE FOR THE LIFEBRIDGE HEALTH EMPLOYEES WHO ARE FIGHTING IT.

“When they signed up to work for LifeBridge Health, they never expected a pandemic of this caliber to happen. It was unthinkable,” Levine explains. “And yet, with all the unknowns of this virus, they are still showing up to work every day, risking their own lives to save ours. That is what LifeBridge Health’s mantra, Care Bravely, is all about. We want them to know that we are cheering for them and that we are grateful for their bravery.”

With that in mind, Levine and his wife, Julie, donated $10,000 to launch the Care Bravely Compassion Fund. The fund enables LifeBridge Health to “take care of the caregivers”—the nurses, physicians, and frontline staff across the system—by providing vitally important things such as shift meals, protective gear, and masks to keep them safe as they care for the community.

The financial impact of COVID-19 cannot be understated. Fifty-thousand face shields are needed immediately at a cost of up to $100,000. A 30-day supply of N-95 masks costs the system $80,000. And, to safeguard our staff both today and into the future, a fabrication facility to produce personal protective equipment (PPEs) is set to open in Spring 2020.

But the emotional costs are just as important. “Our health care workers are exhausted and yet they continue to work tirelessly because they understand the impact this virus has on the community,” Levine says. “By giving to this fund, we can all show them our appreciation. It lifts their spirits and energy levels, which is a major component for helping us all heal.”

Inspired by the Levines’ generosity, LifeBridge Health board member Laura Black and her husband, Charles Klein, made a gift to the Care Bravely Compassion Fund and are now encouraging others to do the same.

“When this is over, I think we all need to do a soul check and ask ourselves, ‘How did I contribute? What did I do to help?’” Black says. “For me, helping the frontline is at the top of my priorities in terms of being a human being and member of this community. It’s about more than paying these workers’ salaries. It’s about letting them know that we care and that they have all of our gratitude.”

Support Our Caregivers Now

Your gift to the Care Bravely Compassion Fund supports our three most urgent priorities during the COVID-19 crisis:

1. STAFF CARE & COMFORT with meals, mental health support, and more

2. PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT & DEVICES including materials to manufacture masks

3. READINESS MEASURES such as community testing tents and intensive care beds

Call 443-695-4640 or visit LifeBridgeHealth.org/CompassionFund to lend your support today.
COVID-19 RESPONSE
How YOU Can Help

Show our nurses, physicians, and frontline staff that you support them and thank them for their heroic work during the COVID-19 crisis by making a gift to the Care Bravely Compassion Fund. Your donation will provide our caregivers with the critical tools they need now, including protective masks, shift meals, and more.

Go to LifeBridgeHealth.org/CompassionFund or call 410-601-GIFT (4438) to support our health care workers now. Learn more on page 7.