IT WON'T TAKE LONG for anyone who searches for hydrocephalus on the Internet to find the name Dr. Michael A. Williams, medical director of the Sandra and Malcolm Berman Brain & Spine Institute and director of the Adult Hydrocephalus Center at Sinai Hospital. That's exactly what happened to Eric Soiland, a financial advisor in California, while he was trying to identify someone doing hydrocephalus research who his client, Mrs. Florine Gardella, could support philanthropically. He gave Dr. Williams' contact information to her and, long story short, Mrs. Gardella began a cross-country correspondence with Dr. Williams that resulted in a $3.5 million bequest to Sinai Hospital for research on normal pressure hydrocephalus (NPH).
Mrs. Gardella’s first letter to Dr. Williams from California, dated June 3, 2012, sheds light on the circumstances that led to her interest in hydrocephalus.

“My husband suffered a long illness because his hydrocephalus was not identified early enough to start treatment before it had done so much damage. In the 1920s, a cousin… was born with hydrocephalus—no cure for him and he died at 19. In the 1980s my son-in-law’s family had a child born with hydrocephalus. I am 92 years old and all my life I’ve been aware of hydrocephalus and feel that even today many adults are not checked for NPH.”

She asked Dr. Williams to learn where funds were most needed. He responded on June 26, with a detailed letter outlining ways in which she could get the greatest return on her investment, suggesting research or fellowships for neurologists or neurosurgeons.

“You letter was exactly what I wanted to know,” Mrs. Gardella wrote back. “Everything was very clear, I chose research at Sinai Hospital with emphasis on NPH. Please let Joel Simon [director of principal & planned gifts] know that all is taken care of as I wanted. Thank you both for your help.”

Born in 1920, Mrs. Gardella was a third grade teacher in California’s Mt. Diablo Unified School District for 25 years. She lived independently almost until the age of 93. In October of 2013, she suffered a stroke and passed away eight months later.

Mrs. Gardella’s niece, Susan France, describes her aunt as having been “an inspirational, strong-willed, progressive and remarkable woman—a two-time cancer survivor who survived the death of her husband, her adored son-in-law and the tragic death of her daughter Sharilynn.”

When Mrs. Gardella’s husband, a retired sheriff, was diagnosed with hydrocephalus, France says her aunt spent her time conducting research to try to find help for him. “Auntie Florine’s cousin, Rollie Bono, Jr., also suffered from hydrocephalus. The effect hydrocephalus had among two of her dear family members is the primary reason she wanted to make this sizeable gift to Sinai Hospital.”

Joel Simon says the gift was unique for Sinai Hospital. “Mrs. Gardella and her advisor were looking for a place to make the bequest, and their search brought them to Michael Williams, who is probably the leading adult hydrocephalus expert in the United States. This gift is significant because it enhances Sinai Hospital’s ability to continue doing the leading research it has done for more than 80 years.”

Staying in Touch

DURING THE cultivation effort, Mrs. Gardella asked for written communication. Says Dr. Williams, “I wrote to her about some of the outreach activities we were involved in with the Hydrocephalus Association and the Adult Hydrocephalus Clinical Research Network, of which Sinai is a member. I also let her know about related research I’m doing with funding from NASA and the National Space Biomedical Research Institute to look into noninvasive ways to measure spinal fluid pressure. Although it is not directly related to hydrocephalus, the outcome of that research, if successful, could benefit patients with hydrocephalus.”

In addition, he shared that Sinai was working with researchers at The Cleveland Clinic and Umeå University in Sweden to develop a multi-center study to find the most efficient and effective diagnostic approach for NPH.

Simon sent Mrs. Gardella’s advisor electronic copies of all of the correspondence. This is something he does routinely when dealing with large gifts from an elderly person. “Her advisor said, ‘I appreciate what you are doing, but it’s not necessary. She is on top of things and she makes the decisions.’”

He points out that Dr. Williams recognized the opportunity with Mrs. Gardella’s letter and contacted the development office to see how Sinai could be responsive to the donor while also benefitting his research. “I feel our role in development in working with the medical staff is to bring funds into the hospital to do things that are beneficial and that the clinician and the hospital administration want done,” Simon says. “That could be anything from money for research to an upgrade on a piece of equipment. At the time—and here’s what’s important—we didn’t know how much Mrs. Gardella had to give.

“Mrs. Gardella never told us about the nature of the bequest,” he says. “The banker was appropriately vague. His words to me were, ’I’m managing a substantial portfolio and she’s a very serious lady.’ So I knew we weren’t talking about $50,000. I figured we’d get a half million dollars and, if we were really lucky, we’d get a million to continue our research.”

According to Dr. Williams, “All Mrs. Gardella said was, ‘I am interested in leaving some of my estate for advancement and treatment of hydrocephalus in adults.’ My perspective has always been that even the smallest gift is a gift, and people leave gifts for a number of reasons. You never know about a person’s giving potential, and the person who can afford to give $100 can be as grateful as someone who can afford to give a million dollars.”

Williams believes that success in fundraising involves helping people be grateful and accepting their thanks. The Berman Brain & Spine Institute routinely identifies patients who may be grateful, he says, and the only thing physicians are asked is whether they think a certain patient is grateful and whether this would be a good time to contact them.

Using the Bequest Responsibly

“MRS. GARDELLA’S BEQUEST” specifies research, and we’re still working on a plan to use the funds. It’s such an extraordinary circumstance. I’m trying to imagine how to best use the funds to have us hip deep in...
Hydrocephalus is an abnormal accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) within cavities in the brain called ventricles. This fluid is in constant circulation and has many functions, including to surround the brain and spinal cord and act as a protective cushion against injury. It contains nutrients and proteins necessary for the nourishment and normal function of the brain, and carries waste products away from surrounding tissues. Hydrocephalus occurs when there is an imbalance between the amount of CSF that is produced and the rate at which it is absorbed. As the CSF builds up, it causes the ventricles to enlarge and the pressure inside the head to increase.

Hydrocephalus affects a wide range of people, from infants and older children to young, middle-aged and older adults.

For every 1,000 babies born in this country, one to two will have hydrocephalus.

Hydrocephalus is the most common reason for brain surgery in children.

Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus (NPH) is an accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) that causes the ventricles in the brain to become enlarged, sometimes with little or no increase in intracranial pressure (ICP). In most cases of NPH, the cause of blockage to the CSF absorptive pathways is unclear.

NPH is most commonly seen in older adults.

It is estimated that more than 700,000 Americans have NPH, but less than 20% receive an appropriate diagnosis.

Without appropriate diagnostic testing, NPH is often misdiagnosed as Alzheimer’s disease or Parkinson’s disease, or the symptoms are attributed to the aging process.

NPH is one of the few causes of dementia that can be controlled or reversed with treatment.

Source: Hydrocephalus Association
Meet Leslie Simmons, President of Carroll Hospital

Westminster Facility is LifeBridge’s New Partner

WITH AN EYE TOWARD OFFERING NEW SERVICES and expanding care for residents of Carroll County, LifeBridge Health and Carroll Hospital partnered on April 1. LifeBridge Health has made a commitment to implement Carroll Hospital’s strategic plan, Vision 2020, and will invest in capital needs at the hospital, including facility construction and renovation as well as the development and expansion of medical services.

“Our hospital has been a cornerstone of the Carroll County community for more than 50 years, says Leslie Simmons, president of Carroll Hospital. “When developing our Vision 2020 plan, we firmly concluded a strategic partnership was the best path forward for the next 50 years. LifeBridge Health’s shared vision and willingness to collaborate with us is energizing. I am extremely excited about our agreement and future together.”

Simmons has been at Carroll for 15 years. She began as the chief nurse in 2000 and in 2004 was promoted to a senior vice president. She rose to the chief operating officer position in 2006. In 2013, she became the executive vice president, and in 2014, the president and chief executive officer. “It’s been quite a journey,” Simmons acknowledges.

A fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, Simmons was recognized as one of The Baltimore Sun Magazine’s 2014 “50 Women to Watch” and The Daily Record’s 2012 “Top 100 Women in Maryland.”

In the following interview, conducted in mid-June, we learn a bit about what makes Simmons tick and hear her thoughts about the partnership.

Q: Your background is in nursing, right?
LS: I started out as an EKG technician at Harbor Hospital in Baltimore. The chief of cardiology there said to me, “I think there is a nurse in you.” He helped me find my path to nursing school. I went on to get my initial nursing degree at Anne Arundel Community College and then I went to the College of Notre Dame for my bachelor’s degree in nursing and then my master’s degree in health administration. I have been a critical care nurse, a nursing director and chief nursing officer.

Q: How did you make the switch to hospital administration?
LS: When I first started out in nursing, I never thought I would become an administrator. It was really the encouragement of others that made me try. There was a head nurse position open and my nursing colleague encouraged me to apply. I discovered that it was good to be in a position where you could make a difference for those doing the work on the front line. It was rewarding, so I stuck with it.

I’ve been blessed in my life to have great mentors and people who have seen things in me that I didn’t see in myself. I never thought I would be running a hospital. But I am excited to be doing it because I love to eliminate obstacles that get in the way of people doing what’s right for the patient. I think my clinical background really helps because my relationship with the staff and the physicians gives me insight into what we need and how to implement things correctly.

Q: What’s the atmosphere like at Carroll Hospital?
LS: It’s a very welcoming environment. There’s definitely a difference here. We’re taking care of our friends, our neighbors and our relatives. We treat people like we’d want to be treated; there’s a lot of pride in what we do.

Q: What’s it like being president?
LS: It’s both exciting and humbling. I really do believe that it’s my role to help people do the best job possible. I’m very focused on that and I’m focused on our community. I want to do whatever I can...
to make healthcare a little less confusing and to make the environment that people work in a lot more rewarding. Every once in a while, the regulations in healthcare weigh me down a bit, but those are the times that I like to go out and round with the staff and reconnect to where the real work happens. That helps keep me grounded and motivated.

**Q: What are your feelings about the impact of the partnership with LifeBridge Health on the community served by Carroll Hospital?**

**LS:** Without a doubt, LifeBridge was the perfect partner for Carroll Hospital because they understand the value of keeping healthcare local. Becoming part of LifeBridge will enable us to bring key programs and services that we need to the community.

Today, healthcare has a lot of challenges and it is nice to be able to tackle them as part of a larger healthcare system. We’re excited about joining an organization that is as nimble as we are and is as creative and community-focused. I’m really looking forward to seeing what we will accomplish together for our communities.

**Q: How’s it going so far?**

**LS:** I think we’re off to a great start. We’ve been able to save over $5 million through various means. For instance, we can purchase items with greater volume discounts and we’ve been able to combine some of our contracting to obtain more savings than we could on our own.

Sharing management across the system has been terrific as well. We’ve been able to draw on each other’s expertise. People are comparing notes and sharing best practices. It’s been great to be able to watch that happening across the system.

**Q: What are some of the programs you might be able to bring now that you wouldn’t have been able to bring before the merger?**

**LS:** The first thing we’ll do is revisit Vision 2020 and take a fresh look. When we created Vision 2020, we did it with our current resources in mind. Now that we are part of LifeBridge, we can look a little broader and think bigger. We’re re-evaluating everything, but I know there’ll be a big focus on: geriatric care; our women’s and children’s services; expanding cardiovascular services; and expanding our overall health and wellness programs. Also, behavioral health will become a very important service line for us. Although we have some resources in the community it’s not enough. Now we are bringing together our resources, both financial and creative, to figure out how to approach all those needs, and having the opportunity to be able to do that is one of the things that makes our partnership with LifeBridge so rewarding.

**Q: I hear you have a new position in LifeBridge. Can you tell me about it?**

**LS:** In addition to being the president of Carroll Hospital, Neil Meltzer [president and CEO of LifeBridge Health] has asked me to lead human resources across the system. As the senior vice president for the health system, I will be dedicated to ensuring a great culture throughout the organization. I look at that as a very big responsibility. We are now taking care of 10,000 associates, and I want to make sure that there is a great environment for those 10,000 people to do the amazing work that they do each and every day. That’s what I’m focused on, and I’m passionate about the journey that takes us there.

*continued on page 6*

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**Carroll Hospital’s Philanthropy is Stellar**

**ELLEN FINNERTY MYERS, C.F.R.E., vice president of corporate development and chief development officer for Carroll Hospital, says the hospital has come a long way from the early 1950s, when volunteers went door-to-door to raise funds to build the hospital. “They raised more than $750,000, and the main organizers even took out personal bank loans to ultimately open the doors and hire staff in October 1961,” she adds.**

She says philanthropy has funded four major expansions of the hospital. “In the 1970s and 1980s, a series of small fundraising campaigns launched the first major modernization of the campus. In the early 1990s, a $3 million campaign helped fund emergency department and operating room improvements as well as renovations to the critical care unit and development of The Women’s Place.”

During 2001-2003, more than $10 million was raised through the fulfilling the Promise campaign, led by local businessman and board member, Jack Tevis. The emergency department was relocated and doubled in size; the south inpatient bed tower was built, transforming the hospital to one with mostly all private rooms. “The crowning jewel,” says Myers, “was the construction of Carroll County’s first and only inpatient hospice facility, funded 100 percent by donations. Now referred to as the Dove House, the facility has enabled thousands of community members to receive compassionate end-of-life care in a warm home-like environment.”

Most recently, adds Myers, current LifeBridge Health and Carroll Hospital board member Marcus Lee Primm chaired the Campaign for Cure & Comfort, Always, garnering more than $23 million in private support to build the new William E. Kahlert Regional Cancer Center and the Tevis Center for Wellness. New technology, including a pharmacy robot and da Vinci robotic surgical system, were funded as well. Myers says Carroll Hospital and Carroll Hospice have nearly 6,000 supporters of all levels.

Carroll Hospital has a separate charitable foundation. “Knowing that philanthropy could help significantly advance the organization,” explains Myers, “the Carroll Hospital Foundation was founded in 1975 specifically to focus on garnering support for the hospital and its non-profit subsidiaries. A board of 21 members was recruited from the community to focus solely on fundraising and advocacy. Since that time, nearly $60 million has been contributed to advance health and caring in Carroll County and surrounding communities.”

Officers of the Foundation include Gerald Lee Sturgill, chairman; Amber Curtis, vice chair; Kent Martin, secretary; and Kevin Kelly, treasurer. Jason Blavatt, chair of the LifeBridge Health board of directors, and Neil M. Meltzer, president and CEO of LifeBridge Health, also sit on the Foundation. Myers and Leslie Simmons serve as Executive Vice President and President of the Carroll Hospital Foundation, respectively.
MEMBERS OF THE LIFEBRIDGE HEALTH Glazer Legacy Society gathered on Sunday, May 3 for a special brunch at the home of LifeBridge Health CEO and President Neil Meltzer and his wife Ellen.

Glazer Legacy Society members received exclusive society lapel pin/pendants at this first annual event.

The LifeBridge Health Glazer Legacy Society is named after Lowell Glazer, a long-time active benefactor and volunteer for LifeBridge Health. The Society recognizes the valuable contributions of special friends who have included one of the LifeBridge Health affiliates in their estate plans. If you would like to become a member of the society, please contact Joel Simon, Director of Principal Gifts, at 410-601-4439 (GIFT) or jsimon@lifebridgehealth.org.

Pictured are Glazer Society members Stanley Friedler, M.D. and Juan Juanteguy, M.D. (left) and Joe and Annette Cooper with Lowell Glazer (right).

Meet Leslie Simmons, President of Carroll Hospital continued from page 5

Q: What do you feel are the biggest challenges facing you now?
LS: Probably physician availability and community health—making sure we have the right number of physicians and specialties in the right locations. Having the resources and the opportunities to connect with our community in new and different ways, so we can really plan and coordinate care and services, I think, will be big challenges moving forward.

Q: How has philanthropy impacted Carroll Hospital and its centers of excellence?
LS: No doubt, without philanthropy we would not have been able to accomplish all the things we have thus far. We’re fortunate to live in a very giving community. We just completed a fundraising campaign that raised $23 million, and it funded things like the William E. Kahlert Regional Cancer Center—and our Tevis Center for Wellness. Our physicians donated over $1.5 million and our employees gave over $1 million. From this, we were also able to outfit and construct new cardiac cath and vascular labs, we have new upgraded operating room equipment, and have funded Dove House, the only hospice inpatient facility in Carroll County. We don’t make enough money in regular revenues to be able to support all those great advancements. We have been humbled and overwhelmed with tremendous community support. It has been a tradition since the day the hospital was founded and it will be imperative to our future success as well.

Q: Going forward, what do you hope that philanthropy will help you do?
LS: We are excited about re-evaluating our Vision 2020 plan. I am confident many new initiatives will result that the community will want to help us bring to fruition. It may mean a new pediatric area, a neonatal intensive care unit and expanded care coordination services to manage chronic illnesses. Whatever we do, it will be to benefit the local community so they have convenient high quality services at their fingertips.

Q: What else would you like readers to know about you?
LS: On a personal note, I’ve been married for 36 years. I live in Westminster with my husband, Greg. He takes care of all of us so that I can spend a lot of time doing this work. I have two grown daughters who are both nurses. One is married to a nurse, one is married to an information technology guy. I have a one-year-old grandson, who just started walking, and who is the light of our world right now.

Q: How do you spend your spare time?
LS: I like to do decorative painting and I like working with colored pencils. I also have my motorcycle license, and I enjoy exploring the back roads of Maryland with my husband. Also, over the past 10 years, we ventured across the country to visit all 50 states. It took a while but we succeeded!

“GOING ON A TRIP? Kids graduating and moving out of the house? Any time you have a significant life change like a wedding or retirement, it is a good idea to update your will and other estate planning documents.
WALK INTO THE LOBBY of the Hackerman-Patz House on the campus of Sinai Hospital, and you will see a large mosaic displayed on the wall. The magnificent stained-glass work of art was donated by Gwenn Eisenberg in honor of Willard and Lillian Patz Hackerman, who gave the money to build the ‘home away from home’ that has housed more than 30,000 people from all around the globe since it opened in 2004.

Eisenberg was Willard Hackerman’s cousin. The bubbly, energetic woman works as program manager at the Hackerman-Patz House and says she feels blessed every day to be able to help carry out Hackerman’s dream.

“He gave the gift that would allow families to have comfortable, safe and affordable lodging on the campus of the hospital,” Eisenberg says. “Very few hospitals in the United States have guest accommodations; Sinai Hospital is one of the lucky ones.”

Asked why she chose to donate the mosaic, Eisenberg says, “I felt like everyone who stays at the Hackerman-Patz House should know who was generous enough to give the money to build this wonderful facility and whose vision it was. They should know that someone cared enough about making their lives easier by building the house.”

The mosaic was designed by Olivia Spencer, who creates artwork for gallery, architectural, community and home settings through an art and design company she owns with her daughter.

“Willard did not like portraits or plaques or statues, but I knew he would like the mosaic,” Eisenberg adds. “It is very pretty, colorful and fun, but it is understated and to the point. He would have loved it,” she believes.

Breathing Life into a Vision

EISENBERG SAYS her cousin Willard was a man of many visions. In 1986, he built the first house at Hopkins Hospital for patients and their families to stay while undergoing treatment there. Seven more houses followed.

Since opening its doors in 2004, the Hackerman-Patz House at Sinai Hospital has hosted guests from all over the world. Some people stay weeks, some stay months. Most return for more treatments and surgeries.

Eisenberg relates how Hackerman loved to talk to the patients and their families. He was amazed when he looked at the map in the lobby showing pins in all 50 states and 80 countries. The pins represent where patients have come from—and Hackerman’s legacy of providing a safe haven for families.

“Willard told me that building the Hackerman-Patz houses was one of the best things he ever did because it would help so many people and their families get through a tough time in their lives.”

Philanthropy Dollars at Work

MOST OF THE MONEY that enables the Hackerman-Patz House to run smoothly comes from philanthropy. “Without philanthropy, we would not be able to provide all of the things we do for our guests,” explains Eisenberg. She says people bring meals and donate non-perishable items for the communal kitchen. Donors also have provided holiday meals, pizza nights, TVs and new beds.

“It’s all about giving. Money helps us the most. Yes, we could have a building here for people to stay, but what makes this place so great is all the little extras we can buy that make their stay a little better.”

“I am honored to be able to make a difference in peoples’ lives every single day. I give money to the Hackerman-Patz House on a regular basis and I am also leaving money to it in my will. This is a first-class operation, and it is very personal to me.

The house has notebooks full of cards and letters from grateful patrons. One wrote, “Thank you from the bottom of my heart for allowing us to stay at the Hackerman-Patz House. We appreciate all that you do to make this place a home away from home. This house is so special and the support we receive here is invaluable. Staying here eased the stress on my entire family. This house is a blessing…”

As for Eisenberg, she says she feels her cousin in the house, especially when she is laughing at things he would have thought were funny. “Willard gave me a lot of advice I didn’t understand at the time. Sometimes when I feel him, I say, ‘Okay, you were right, but we are doin’ good. We are doin’ real good.’”

Note: If you would like to support the good work of the Hackerman-Patz House at Sinai Hospital by making a monetary donation, please call 410-601-8774. Gifts in kind like art supplies, games, meals and electronics are welcome as well.
Grace E.G. Callwood was honored as a 2014 Outstanding Youth Fundraiser through the Association of Fundraising Professionals. Grace is an inspiring 10-year old who has beaten cancer and started her own movement called WeCancerve. Its goal is to help children affected by cancer and who are hospitalized, placed in foster homes or homeless feel better through her philanthropic efforts. She is shown here with her mom, T’Jae Gibson, at the National Philanthropy Day Luncheon at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, where her award was presented.

Congratulations, Grace! You are truly remarkable!