IN TODAY'S health care environment, hospitals are relying more and more on philanthropy, especially in Maryland, where state reimbursement policies are changing. How fortunate for LifeBridge, then, to count Roz and Len Stoler as benefactors.

The generous couple recently donated $3 million to name the Roslyn and Leonard Stoler Tower at Sinai Hospital, which has six floors and more than 200,000 square feet of space dedicated to the most critical care needs. The tower houses an intensive care unit and a neurocritical care unit, a cardiac diagnostic center, a neuroscience center, brain and spine programs, a neurological rehabilitation center, an intermediate care unit and a rooftop helipad.

Philanthropists Roslyn and Leonard Stoler Lead by Example
Couple Give Multi-Million Dollar Gift

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Gratitude for the Alvin and Lois Lapidus Cancer Institute Begets Generous Multi-Year Commitment

BHARATI PAREKH paints—beautiful works of oil on canvas—but does not like the label of artist.

And at 68, the Baltimorean by-way-of Gujarat, India, is a survivor of multiple recurrences of ovarian cancer but refuses to think of the experience as a battle. Anything that too neatly puts the rich complexities of life into simple containers—not unlike the thick, gooey rainbow of paints Bharati squeezes from tubes—has no place.

“I don’t start a canvas with any specific thing in mind. I don’t always use a brush. I may put the paint on directly with the tube or my fingers and I am open to receiving what comes to me,” she says, noting that none of her works—be it a rendering of the Hindu deity Ganesh or an abstract—is titled.

Simply, she says, “I play with colors.”

In the same way, Bharati notes, “I accept that I am a cancer survivor, but that doesn’t make me who I am. It’s a journey of self-awareness.”

The gift of remaining upon the earth—of getting to enjoy her two daughters, son-in-law, family and friends—Bharati credits to her doctors at the Alvin and Lois Lapidus Cancer Institute.

“I owe my life to Sinai and the very special doctors there,” says Bharati, including Gwen L. Dubois, her primary care physician, and the following cancer specialists: team leader Fouad M. Abbas, her gynecology oncologist; Cardella W. Coleman, her radiology oncologist; Kenneth D. Miller, her medical oncologist; and Mukund S. Didolkar, the Lapidus Institute’s director of surgical oncology.

“All five of them are always on the same page when it comes to mom. They are one team,” says Nupur Parekh Flynn, a member of the Sinai Hospital board of directors since 2011. Nupur, managing director/director of marketing at Brown Capital Management, and her husband, Guy E. Flynn, chair of the Maryland Real Estate Practice at DLA Piper, made a significant multi-year pledge this year to the integrative therapy program at the Lapidus Institute, a commitment that will take place over five years. Services include alternative healing techniques such as art therapy, massage therapy, Reiki, meditation and yoga, all of which are designed to treat the mind as well as the body in a non-invasive manner in order to promote healing.

“All of the programs take place in the outpatient infusion center at Sinai Hospital while patients undergo chemotherapy treatments,” says Yolanda Marzouk, coordinator of patient services. “The goal of the therapies, offered at no cost to patients, is to alleviate the physical and emotional side effects of cancer as well as to enhance patients’ experiences during their treatments.”

In 2005, Bharati started experiencing certain symptoms that were unusual for a post-menopausal woman. She had a battery of tests, but everything came back negative and inconclusive. During this time, Nupur received a serendipitous email from a colleague that mentioned the blood test called CA 125, the most frequently used bio-marker for detecting ovarian cancer. It has become known as the female equivalent of the PSA prostate test for men. Nupur urged her mom to request the test.

Bharati’s numbers were high, well over 600; normal readings are considered to be 35 and below. A full hysterectomy followed a biopsy; chemo began in June 2005, five months before her 60th birthday.

The cancer came back about a year later and then returned again and again. To this day, Bharati is not completely free of it. There are traces here and there...
A “ROSE IS A ROSE IS A ROSE,” but cancer—be it liver or lung or any of their dreadful kin—is as unique as the person battling it.

Zeroing in on the idiosyncratic aspects of a patient and their cancer, said to be as individual as a fingerprint, is the mission of the staff at Sinai Hospital’s Lapidus Cancer Institute.

Their goal is to take the institute to a level that provides every patient with personalized and individual cancer care no matter their age or type of cancer.

At first glance, personalized and individual may seem redundant. A closer look reveals the approach to be nuanced and layered.

Personalized cancer is treated in a way that is tailored to its genomic makeup, which can be as individual as a patient’s personal makeup. It is more than simply diagnosing the correct kind of cancer—it’s customizing the therapy.

To that end, the institute is working to establish a “translational” research lab on site. The idea is to have research that can be done in a laboratory and translated to the bedside.

The cost of such a lab has been estimated at between $3 million and $4 million. Properly staffing such a lab is paramount.

The institute needs on-site, PhD bench researchers to complement its excellent clinicians. Currently, clinicians at the Lapidus Institute are assigned to some 40 clinical cancer trials both nationally and close to home.

The trials are complicated investigations into different treatments, both medication and surgical, for all cancers. At this point in time, the Lapidus Institute does not have any bench researchers to staff a translational lab. That’s something that must be built.

The flip side of personalized care is individual care. Those are needs outside of the direct cancer treatment, which can include a wide range of concerns.

Clinicians address nutritional and emotional needs as well as psychological and social problems. Staff, including a social worker, meets with every new patient to find out, among other things, what they are most worried about.

What some in the health fields call “alternative” therapies are known as “integrated” therapies at the Lapidus Cancer Institute. They take place in the chemo infusion rooms while a patient is receiving treatment.

This includes “sound immersion” (both music and dissonant “noise,” which some patients find especially soothing), art therapy, acupuncture and Reiki massage.

The approach is not unique to the Lapidus Cancer Institute but it is also far from common. It is being used at some of the larger centers and hospitals dedicated to cancer research and treatment.

Dr. Bradford Carter, medical director of the Lapidus Cancer Institute at Sinai, meets with clinicians to discuss strategies for the best use of money raised by the LifeBridge philanthropy team. The challenge is figuring out how to use gifts being made now to build for the future.

Last year, Alvin and Lois Lapidus, whose generosity has supported the institute since it opened in 1999, committed a new gift of $2 million to the facility which bears their name. All of that gift will go to research.

Many donations help with expensive equipment, such as 24 new specialty chairs in the infusion center that were recently provided by the Edward J. Friedman Foundation. Other gifts—some of them memorial funds in honor of a loved one who lost the battle—are used for patient assistance, to help provide for everything from groceries to utility bills.
Philanthropists Roslyn and Leonard Stoler Lead by Example

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“For several years, we had been looking for a project at Sinai Hospital we wanted to donate to,” Roz explains. “Len came to me a few months ago and told me about the tower and what it means to Sinai. We knew we had found something special to support.”

Len, who sits on the LifeBridge Health board and serves on its finance and budget committee, adds that he and Roz were drawn to the tower because of its impact on people. “The tower is good for everybody—doctors, patients and families. When we heard about the work that goes on there, we thought it was so wonderful we couldn’t say no,” says the Baltimore native.

LifeBridge Health President and CEO Neil Meltzer couldn’t be happier about that. He explains, “Roslyn and Leonard Stoler’s visionary gift will impact Sinai Hospital’s patient-centered care now and for generations to come. It will enable Sinai to continue to provide progressive, high-quality, health-related services.”

From Pushkes to Partnerships

BOTH LEN AND ROZ came from very humble beginnings. “When I was growing up, we didn’t have a lot, but my mother had pushkes all over the house,” Len recalls. “She had a pushke for pennies and a pushke for nickels. She also had pushkes in the dining room: one for dimes and one for quarters. Putting money in those pushkes was the start of my philanthropy.”

Ironically, Stoler, who owns 13 car dealerships in Maryland and New York, came to the industry by happenstance. “Because of my years at the University of Baltimore and, later, the electronics schools the Air Force sent me to, I only needed one more year of college in order to get an engineering degree. But Hopkins had a Jewish resident quota that was filled, so I had to wait a year. In the meantime, I ran into an old friend who kept hounding me to accept a job on his used car lot; he said he needed someone he could trust.” The two friends became partners, and Len never looked back.

Roz comes from Pittsburgh but moved to Baltimore when her brother-in-law, “It’s Time to Give Back”

CHECK OUT THEIR philanthropic resume and you’ll see that Len and Roz have set an exceptional example for their children. In addition to their leadership gift to LifeBridge Health, Len and Roz named the Stoler Pavilion at University of Maryland Medical Center and the Stoler Early Childhood Learning Center at the Jewish Community Center in Owings Mills.

Additionally, Len serves on the Board of The Associated and lends his talents to Believe in Tomorrow, a national foundation that provides housing for children who are being treated in hospitals. Roz sits on the board of Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital, Chana and the University of Maryland Greenebaum Cancer Center.

“In Hebrew, the word for justice and charity is the same: tzedakah,” Len explains. “That’s the philosophy behind our charitable work.

“We are lucky to have the ability to give. We provided for our futures and for our children’s futures, and now it’s time to give back a little.”

“If people knew about everything that is going on at LifeBridge Health and the dedication of the people who work there, they would feel very comfortable giving. The people are very hard-working, and the quality of patient care is up there with the best of hospitals. It’s a very worthy cause and a good place to put your money.”

A reception celebrating the naming of the Roslyn & Leonard Stoler Tower took place in early June in the Jacqueline N. Hess Memorial Garden at Sinai Hospital of Baltimore. The Stolers were presented with personalized physician’s coats as honorary members of our critical care clinical team, represented here (back row, left to right) by Drs. Neal Naff, Jennifer Berkley, Adrian Goldszmidt, Patrick McGinley, Paul Garbel and Scott Brown.

Roz and Len

PHOTOS: JASON LEE
Plan for the Inevitable: Update Your Will!

ESTATE PLANNING is like a five-year-old eating an ice cream cone in July. If you don’t plan for the inevitable, there will be a big mess to clean up. If you have not updated your will, be sure to contact your attorney. When you update your estate plans, we hope you will include LifeBridge Health or specifically Sinai Hospital, Northwest Hospital or Levindale. For more information, please contact Joel Simon, director of principal gifts, at jsimon@lifebridgehealth.org.
Northwest Hospital Completes Leadership Gift Phase of ER Campaign

CO-CHAIRS Lynn Abeshouse and Tommy Obrecht hosted a celebration marking the completion of the Leadership Gift Phase of the Northwest Hospital ER Campaign at the Doubletree by Hilton in Pikesville in December. This phase included the solicitation of the hospital’s key stakeholders, including the executive team, board of directors, medical staff and past major donors. Its extraordinary success, which led to a revised campaign goal of $5 million, will strengthen efforts to gain support from the wider Northwest community, including hospital employees. The $5 million goal represents nearly 50% of the total project cost.

The renovation and expansion of the ER will help address the space constraints that have resulted from treating more than 60,000 patients annually in a facility designed to accommodate 50,000 a year. The existing 21,670 square-foot, 38-bed facility will be expanded into a 30,300 square-foot, 54-bed facility with additional administrative, clinical support and functional areas. In addition to increased capacity, the Northwest ER renovation will enhance patient care through:

- Improved patient flow
- Decreased wait times from triage through treatment and evaluation as well as from movement out of the ER for discharge or hospital admission
- Redesigned waiting area to provide more efficient check-in and comfort for incoming patients and families
- Adequate space to ensure patient privacy and faster processing out of the general waiting area
- Nursing stations located in close proximity to the Urgent Care, Rapid Care and observation beds
- Enhanced patient monitoring
- Expansion of dedicated trauma and resuscitation areas
- Increased overflow capacity for patients awaiting open hospital rooms
- Three new ambulance bays to assure orderly parking and safe transfer of patients
- Relocating of non-clinical and administrative offices to maximize direct patient care activities and critical care support systems
- The ability to efficiently move the 93% of patients admitted to the hospital through the ER.

The project, which began in August 2012, will be completed in 2016. Hord Coplan Macht is the architect; Whiting-Turner is the contractor.

Opportunities are available for donors to be recognized throughout the emergency department. A list of naming opportunities can be obtained by contacting the Department of Development at 410-601-GIFT.

Special thanks go to those who, among others, made leadership gifts to the campaign: the Beverly K. and Jerome M. Fine Foundation, Willard Hackerman* and the Whiting-Turner Contracting Company; the Emmert Hobbs Foundation; the State of Maryland and the Maryland Hospital Association; Northwest Hospital Auxiliary; and the Henry and Ruth Blaustein Rosenberg Foundation, Inc.

*deceased
MEMBERS OF THE Sinai and LifeBridge Health boards joined staff from the Herman & Walter Samuelson Children’s Hospital to celebrate the naming of the Footlick Family Foundation Children’s Diagnostic Center in its new, expanded location at Sinai Hospital. The center is the second part of an expansion project at the Herman & Walter Samuelson Children’s Hospital at Sinai. President and CEO Neil Meltzer said, “We are honored and delighted to recognize the Footlick family for many, many years of dedicated service and generous support of LifeBridge Health and Sinai Hospital, of which the Samuelson Children’s Hospital is only the most recent example.”

Ronnie Footlick’s service goes back many years, starting when she served as a member and then president of the Sinai Hospital Auxiliary. She has served on the board of Sinai Hospital since 1994 and is a former board chair. Ronnie has also been a member of the LifeBridge Health board since the health system’s founding in 1998 and served as its board chair from 2007 to 2010. Ronnie’s daughter Leslie has followed in her footsteps and is a current member of the Sinai board, and Ronnie and her husband Bob co-chaired the successful LifeBridge Health Magic of Life Gala in 2012.

LIFEBRIDGE HEALTH HELD ITS annual “Gathering of Friends” stewardship event in Florida in February. More than 70 board members and generous supporters joined LifeBridge Health President and CEO Neil Meltzer, Sinai Hospital President Amy Perry, Northwest Hospital President Brian White and Levindale Chief Operating Officer Barry Eisenberg at the Boca West Country Club for cocktails, hors d’oeuvres and dinner.

Guests were treated to an educational presentation by Drs. Paresh Shah and Jeffrey Banker, heart rhythm specialists at the LifeBridge Health Cardiovascular Institute. Music and dancing followed dinner.

Pictured here, from left, are Dr. Paresh Shah, Sinai Hospital board member Lowell Glazer and LifeBridge Health President and CEO Neil Meltzer.
Win the Day for the Race for Our Kids

REGISTRATION IS UNDERWAY for the Race for Our Kids, slated for Sunday, September 21. The event, presented by the Sinai Hospital Auxiliary, includes a 5K, 10K and 1-mile Family Fun Walk.

The 5K and 10K courses are surrounded by the rolling hills and beautiful scenery of Mt. Washington. You can run or walk the 5K (3.1 miles) course or the more challenging 10K (6.2 miles) course. The 10K will have $4,100 in cash prizes. Please note: For the safety of all participants, no strollers or dogs will be permitted on the 5K or 10K race routes.

Ideal for families with young children and for walkers who want a gentle challenge, the Family Fun Walk will travel both the Levindale and Sinai Hospital campuses. The interactive themed walk will have lots of fun surprises! Strollers are permitted on the route. There is no fee for children 5 and under to participate, but families should register in order to ensure an appropriate number of supplies.

Register online at www.raceforourkids.org.