

THE LG EXPERIENCE

LANCASTER GENERAL HEALTH

JULY/AUGUST 2023

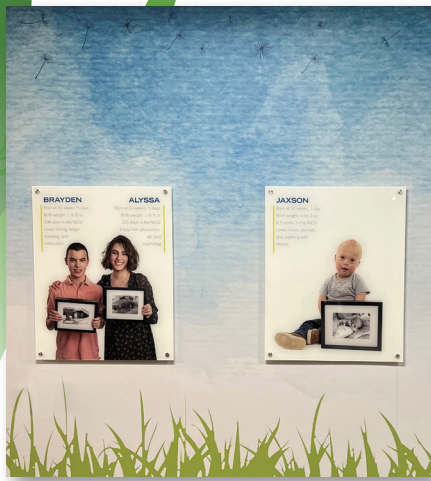
NICU

Wall of HOPE INSPIRES FAMILIES TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY



A NICU, or neonatal intensive care unit, stay is never in a parent's dream birth plan. NICU babies often have to be away from the loving arms of their parents to stay in incubators, sometimes are hooked up to tubes to eat and breathe, and require specialized nursing care before their stay at the NICU is over. NICU stays can last anywhere from days to months.

That is why when babies and their families need to be transferred to the NICU, the staff at Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health Women & Babies Hospital (WBH) work tirelessly to offer the most advanced care and inspire hope to ease the stress and uncertainty of a NICU stay.



On June 8, Margi Bowers, MSN, MHA, RN, NE-BC, nurse manager at the WBH NICU, and the rest of the unit's staff unveiled the NICU's "Wall of Hope," a tribute to past patients meant to inspire families currently on their NICU journey. The Wall of Hope features former patients, both children and adults, holding a photo from when they were in the NICU, along with short bios of what they enjoy doing now.

Unveiling the "Wall of Hope"

"Margi has been planning this project for over three years, and it is so exciting to see her vision come alive," said **Lyndsay Tawney**, administrative director of Women's & Pediatrics at LG Health. "Thanks to community donations to the LG Health Foundation NICU fund, the Wall of Hope features beautiful photos of 26 patients, of all different ages, who are now grown and living healthy lives. For those parents and families who are going through an unexpected or expected NICU admission, it's a way to inspire

them and show them that there is support and positivity out there."

The families featured on the wall were invited to the unveiling ceremony to see the installation and reflect on their NICU experience. The event felt like a reunion as many past patients and families continue to stay in touch with the staff at the WBH NICU. They even have their own Facebook page through which families connect with each other and their NICU nurses, share birthday photos, and ask for recommendations on common experiences like medical procedures.

Continues on back



► From right, Margi Bowers, MSN, MHA, RN, NE-BC, stands with Manjeet Kaur, MD, her son-in-law Ryan (holding her grandson) who is featured on the Wall of Hope, and her daughter.



CEO MESSAGE

JOHN J. HERMAN, MBA, FACHE, CEO, PENN MEDICINE LANCASTER GENERAL HEALTH

The mission of Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health to advance the health and well-being of the communities we serve is deeply personal to each of us, because these are the communities where we live and raise our own families. We can take great pride in the work we are doing to foster an environment where our employees and their families can thrive, and our patients can realize their dreams of parenthood. Together, we are building stronger families, one person at a time.

The world-renowned fertility care we provide is grounded in the belief that there is no one way to build a family. Penn Fertility Care - Lancaster General Health offers a range of treatments including preconception planning, ovulation induction, intrauterine insemination (IUI procedure), in vitro fertilization (IVF), reproductive surgery and management of polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and endometriosis. We are also the only fertility clinic in Lancaster County with our own embryology lab allowing patients to receive all services on site.

Since opening its doors in October 2020, the practice has grown in total visits by 83% and the treatment volume has grown by over 100%. We recently welcomed Dr. Christine Skiadas to serve as medical director of the practice. She is double-board certified in Reproductive Endocrinology/Infertility and Obstetrics and Gynecology and brings tremendous knowledge and experience to Lancaster County.

Just as we embrace the transformative power of fertility care in helping individuals and couples in our community grow their families, we are equally as committed to supporting our employees in building and strengthening their own families. At the core of our organization lies a deep belief in the importance of the health and well-being of our employees. We recognize that our staff are not only working professionals, but also parents, partners and caregivers. That's why we provide an array of family support programs to address their diverse needs and unique journeys. Some of these benefits include:

- Reimbursement for qualified surrogacy or adoption expenses and a \$30,000 lifetime maximum benefit for employees seeking fertility treatment.
- Four weeks of paid parental time following the birth or adoption placement of a dependent child.
- The LG Health Employee Assistance Fund to provide financial support for employees facing a wide range of temporary circumstances that place hardships on individuals and their families.
- Special discounted rates and priority placement for childcare as well as a free membership to Care.com for employees with children age 12 and under.

When I think of family, these things come to mind: patience, understanding, teamwork, trust, support and love. The same things come to mind when I think of the work we do each day at Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health to create and support strong families.

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- Project SEARCH Celebrates Spring Graduation
- Family Medicine Oxford Creates Food Pantry for Patients in Need

Wall of HOPE



Continued from front

Bowers, the initiator of the photo project, said, “It is an inspiration to our current families but I didn’t realize how many people this Wall of Hope would touch outside of those current families. For example, a WBH food service employee stopped me in the hallway one day, and with tears in her eyes said, I had four NICU babies in another state and I can’t tell you what this hallway means to me when I pass through it every day.”

Bowers’ son-in-law Ryan is featured on the wall and was one of the first babies cared for in the premature nursery when it was at Lancaster General Hospital (LGH) before moving to WBH in 2000. Ryan was born at 30 weeks, weighing just 3 pounds 2 ounces, and spent 90 days in the NICU. He was cared for by **Manjeet Kaur, MD** who helped establish the first NICU at LGH in 1980. Ryan now enjoys spending time with family, golfing and fishing.

The Martin Family NICU Story

Another family featured on the “Wall of Hope” is the Martin family. Justin and Alyssa Martin had daughter Ryann on July 24, 2018. Ryann was the family’s one surviving triplet and was born at 27 weeks, weighing 1 pound 8 ounces. She spent 85 days in the NICU, followed by a heart surgery at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP).

When asked about their story, Alyssa Martin shared, “I was at the NICU every day, for most of the day, while Ryann was a patient and the NICU nurses became our family – we call them our “aunties”. The NICU journey is not easy and it’s lifelong, but through it we have made some of our closest relationships.”

Bowers adds, “Each family on the wall has a story. Just like the story of Cayden featured at the entrance—he has a big, toothy smile and you can’t help but smile when you walk into work. These families are why I and my staff do what we do.”

The Relationship Doesn't Stop When You Go Home

At the Wall of Hope ceremony, WBH staff greeted their former patients with hugs and comments on how much they have grown. The reunion of staff and NICU families continued as they perused the hallway, admiring the photos together. “It takes a special kind of nurse to take care of not only the patient but also the families,” commented **Geoff Eddowes**, senior vice president for WBH Hospital Operations. “Our staff at WBH keeps in touch with you even after your baby is discharged from the NICU and that kind of relationship is unprecedented.”



▶ Justin and Alyssa Martin hold their two daughters Ryann (left) and Maggie (right). Ryann was a NICU baby in 2018 and is featured on the Wall of Hope – her parents call her “their warrior”.



Project SEARCH CELEBRATES SPRING GRADUATION



▶ Pictured here are the seven graduates from the 2023 Project SEARCH class

On May 19, Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health celebrated the class of 2023 graduates of the Project SEARCH program. Project SEARCH is an internship program at LG Health that provides work, social and life skills to local high school seniors with intellectual challenges. Through the program, students gain confidence, independence and experience as they reach for their goal of employment at Lancaster General Hospital (LGH) or within the broader Lancaster community after graduation.

LG Health partners with local Lancaster-area organizations including the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Lancaster County and the Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13 (IU13), an education service agency, to operate Project SEARCH.

Students are fully immersed in three separate LG Health internships for the entirety of their senior year, with each internship lasting 9 to 10 weeks. The students follow a schedule of learning job-specific skills on-site Monday through Thursday, followed by classroom work on Fridays learning a life skills curriculum that includes how to write a check and how to obtain a learner’s permit and driver’s license.

This year’s annual graduation ceremony was held at the IU13 building, with an additional drop-in celebration at LGH where LG Health mentors had the opportunity to congratulate this year’s class of seven graduates.

“The evolution our students experience starting in September to graduation in May is an amazing one,” said **Maria Shedleski**, manager, Volunteer Services & Community Outreach. “The program is not only about the job skills but also the social and life skills which transform students into confident young adults.”

Family Medicine Oxford CREATES FOOD PANTRY FOR PATIENTS IN NEED



The Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health team at Family Medicine Oxford noticed some patients in their community were struggling to secure basic food and hygiene needs. Using their own resources, the team recently stepped up to create a mini food pantry at their family medicine location to help combat this issue. “Our patients are very appreciative that we are able to offer these services to them. We are hoping to get the word out to more of our patients,” said **Sharon Dille**, LPN, at Family Medicine Oxford. If you would like to donate to the Family Medicine Oxford food pantry, all donations can be sent to Katie Darcus at 620 Spear St, Oxford, PA, 19363.

LG Health also operates The LG Pantry, which benefits employees and offers three pick-up locations including Lancaster General Hospital (LGH), the Suburban Pavilion and the headquarters at the Commercial Avenue/Human Resources office. Food bags are pre-packed and provide a day’s worth of food, based on a family of four. Locations are self-service which ensures a convenient and private pick-up.

The LG Pantry is made possible by donations from fellow LG Health employees. If you are interested and able to donate to the LG Pantry, or if you or your family are experiencing a need, please contact the confidential mailbox LGH-FoodPantry@pennmedicine.upenn.edu or access the Employee Service Center page on StarNet.



▶ Jenn Komisarek, certified medical assistant (left) and Melissa Hubley, MD, (right) worked together on the Family Medicine Oxford food pantry. Jenn thought of the food pantry idea and Dr. Hubley creates the hygiene care packages to go along with the groceries provided at the food pantry.

▶ THE LG EXPERIENCE

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