

# Children's Connection

For the Friends of Children's Specialized Hospital Foundation



Spring Issue 2020



**Meet Leah**, our CMNH  
2020 NJ Champion Child  
[page 4](#)



# Our Message To You

## Dear Friends,

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s we write this letter, we are facing unforeseen and rapidly changing circumstances. As always, our first priority is the health and safety of our patients, their families and our staff. Throughout our history, one of the things that the Children's Specialized Hospital family has proven time and time again, is that when things seem to be at their worst we are prepared to meet the challenge – from the influenza epidemic in the early 1900's, the polio epidemic in the middle of the last century, natural disasters like Hurricane Sandy to today's COVID-19 pandemic.

Our staff is committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure the safety of our patients, and we can assure you that we are diligently following the guidelines established by the New Jersey Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as we continue to deliver the care needed to help all patients entrusted to us. It is our honor, our obligation and our mission.

As we all do our best to stay safe and healthy and navigate our way through this unprecedented time, we want to express our concern for you and your family and thank you for your support. With your assistance, we have provided innovative and compassionate specialized care for our patients for nearly 130 years.

Together we will get through this and continue to provide the personalized, quality care needed for every child to reach their full potential.

Thank you and best wishes to you, your family and those you love.

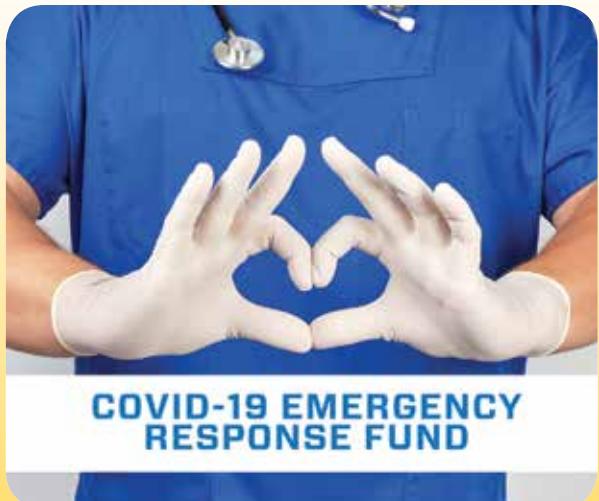
Best wishes,



**Warren E. Moore, FACHE**  
President and CEO,  
Children's Specialized Hospital and  
Senior Vice President, Pediatric  
Services, RWJBarnabas Health



**Philip Salerno III**  
Children's Specialized Hospital  
Foundation President and Chief  
Development Officer



Because many of our supporters have asked how they can help in this unprecedented time, we have created a COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund to address the growing needs that are arising as a result of the challenges presented by this virus. As you know, we are facing unforeseen and rapidly changing circumstances. As always, our first priority is to provide support to ensure the health and safety of our patients, their families and dedicated staff at Children's Specialized Hospital.

To donate to the COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund please visit: [www.childrens-specialized.org/emergency-fund](http://www.childrens-specialized.org/emergency-fund)

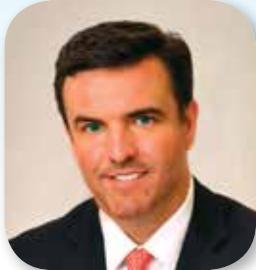
With your assistance we can work together to overcome this crisis and continue to provide innovative and compassionate specialized care for all patients served by Children's Specialized Hospital.



## Welcome New Trustees

### CHILDREN'S SPECIALIZED HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

#### Newly Appointed Children's Specialized Hospital Foundation Trustees



**Bill Arnold**

President Southern Region  
RWJBarnabas Health



**Bonnie Rodriguez**

VP, Health Care Compliance  
Pharmaceuticals  
Johnson & Johnson



**Fred Tewell**

National Sales Director,  
Neuroscience  
Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc.



**Victor Visconti**

Senior Director  
Clean Energy Future  
PSE&G Company

## We're Setting Our Sights on Walk n' Roll This Fall!

Last year, a record number of participants helped raise over \$203,000 to support the children and families here at Children's Specialized Hospital! It was an amazing day of fun activities and camaraderie and we are excited to see everyone come out again this year! We can all be #EverydayHeroes for the kids and our #HealthcareHeroes...either in person at beautiful Johnson Park in Piscataway or if necessary due to the current health crisis, at our first ever Virtual Walk n' Roll!



Register Today at [childrens-specialized.org/walk](http://childrens-specialized.org/walk) and start building your team! Follow Children's Specialized Hospital on Facebook and Instagram for the latest Walk n' Roll news and to be part of an upcoming Challenge to get your team excited about this year's event!

Funds raised will support our COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund, helping to ensure the safety of our staff and continued care for our most vulnerable patients during this global health crisis.



**Join us September 13th!**

Register at  
[www.childrens-specialized.org/walk](http://www.childrens-specialized.org/walk)  
to get your team started!





# 2019: A Year in Review



## Opportunity Project

Children's Specialized Hospital partnered with Opportunity Project, a program empowering individuals over the age of 18 with brain injuries.

This partnership provides significant benefits for both organizations, creating an aligned structure, leveraging missions, visions and strengths and supporting strategic directions. It also ensures Opportunity Project's continued expansion and streamlines the transition of services offered at CSH for young adults with brain injury as they enter adulthood.



## Kohl's Cares Grant

In 2019, Kohl's committed \$630,000 to Children's Specialized Hospital Foundation. The Kohl's Cares grant helps fund community education and outreach including free community-based developmental screenings, community education, safety programs and resources, and support for families within Children's Specialized Rapid Service Model.

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## Dr. Bentley 40 Under 40

Dr. Katherine Bentley, Director of the Chronic Pain Management Program at CSH was named to NJBIZ Forty Under 40. Under Dr. Bentley's leadership, CSH is changing the conversation about pediatric chronic pain by pioneering transforming methods and philosophies which have achieved proven success without the use of opioids.



## Rady Partnership

Children's Specialized Hospital and Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego announced a partnership to expand CSH's East Coast-based

Chronic Pain Management Program to pediatric and adolescent patients in San Diego, Southern California and the southwestern United States. This initiative is the first inpatient chronic pain program in Southern California.



## Work Readiness

In 2019, CSH kicked off the Center for Discovery, Innovation & Development (CDID) Work Readiness Program in Mountainside. This partnership, launched by CDID with the Union County Educational Services Commission (UCESC), allows CSH to host five interns for the entire 2019-2020 school year in the departments of materials management, outpatient operations, CSH Foundation and dietary. This program helps to prepare students with special needs for success in integrated, competitive employment as they transition to adulthood.



## 2019 Stats-At-A-Glance

- Children's Specialized Hospital is the **nation's #1 provider** in pediatric rehabilitation
- Over **38,500** children were treated at CSH in 2019 – a 4.3% increase over 2018
- **\$1 million** in charity care was provided in 2019
- The hospital engaged over **600 volunteers** for nearly **19,000** hours
- Over **230 corporate volunteers** participated in more than 34 Community Service Days
- The hospital participated in **81 research projects**



# Leah Hansen:



## Children's Miracle Network Hospitals 2020 New Jersey Champion Child

Over the next eight weeks, Leah received physical, occupational, and speech therapy. Pool therapy was her favorite, and it was in the water that Leah took her first steps following her stroke. Abby credits the doctors and therapists at CSH for Leah's miraculous recovery. "Without the non-stop energy, smiles, and hard work of her therapists, Leah's story wouldn't be as successful as it is. We know we chose the right place for Leah."

Immediately following her inpatient hospital stay, Leah began outpatient physical and occupational therapies at Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside. She has been working hard with her therapists to improve her core strength and increase the function of her left hand. She has been doing so well that she recently graduated from her physical therapy sessions and now continues to work on her exercises at home!



**"Without the non-stop energy, smiles, and hard work of her therapists, Leah's story wouldn't be as successful as it is. We know we chose the right place for Leah."**

Leah is a resilient young girl and she is adjusting to her challenges. Abby and Peter are so proud of Leah and emphasize, "Leah doesn't let anything hold her back!" To that point, even though Leah can't move her left hand, she chose to play the trombone. With her father's help, they built a stand to hold the trombone while she plays, and she's now in the 5th grade orchestra. Leah recently ran a 5k with her family, she loves to ski, and she's even back on the softball field!

**Leah Hansen is a true champion!**

**A**n outstanding third grade softball player known for her infectious smile and tenacity on the field, nine-year-old Leah was playing with her sister when she began to experience tingling in her fingers. Rushed to the emergency room, 12 hours later Leah was paralyzed from the neck down and unable to move. Leah remained in the hospital, a quadriplegic with no known prognosis.

Her parents, Abby and Peter, were terrified for their daughter and for their family. Trying to escape this nightmare, each night, Abby prayed, "Maybe when we wake up she'll be fine."

Finally there was a diagnosis: a spinal cord stroke. Only 2% of all strokes originate in the spinal cord and they are almost unheard of in young, healthy children.

Abby and her husband Peter knew about Children's Specialized Hospital from friends and family and were certain that Children's Specialized was the best place for Leah's greatest chance of recovery. When she arrived at CSH, Leah had difficulty breathing on her own. She had some muscle control of her right leg and could wiggle her toes, but she was in extreme pain. It hurt even to be touched.



# Activity Connection Programs to Expand with \$250,000 Grant from PSEG Foundation

**C**hildren's Specialized Hospital Foundation has been awarded a \$250,000 grant to help fund the expansion of Activity Connection programs at Children's Specialized Hospital. The Activity Connection programs provide children with varying abilities opportunities to make new friends, participate in recreational activities and enjoy new leisure experiences. Participants also establish community-based relationships that will serve them well beyond the term of the programs.

"Funding from generous organizations like PSEG Foundation allows Children's Specialized Hospital to continue to grow programs like Activity Connection that build critical life-long social and educational skills for young children and their families," said Caitlyn Foelsch, Manager of Community Programs at Children's Specialized Hospital. "We are eager to expand these programs to attract more families and provide recreational opportunities to more of our children and youth, while keeping participation costs as low and reasonable as possible."

In 2019, Children's Specialized Hospital served 1,574 children and youth ages one to 21 through Activity Connection programs, which include arts, recreation, sports and social activities for a diverse population of children and teens with special health care needs. Children with special needs often experience limited opportunities for social, athletic, or artistic development that their peers enjoy. Through Activity Connection, children of all abilities are able to engage in fun recreational activities with their peers experiencing acceptance, compassion and friendship.

"The PSEG Foundation helps to build sustainable and thriving communities by fostering equity, safety, diversity and inclusion in the communities we serve," said Maria Spina, PSEG Foundation Program Manager. "Children's Specialized Hospital's Activity Connection program plays an important role for children and we are thrilled to be able to support its expansion. Additionally, through volunteer opportunities and interaction with the children, our employees will understand the importance of fostering a culture of tolerance, respect and inclusion – values that they can bring to their work environment and in their communities."

For more information about Activity Connection programs, please visit the website at [www.childrensspecialized.org/recreation](http://www.childrensspecialized.org/recreation) or call (908) 301-5548.



*Instructor Wazir Barnes teaches the martial arts program for youth with special needs. This program helps to promote awareness of self, energy, focus, performance and control.*

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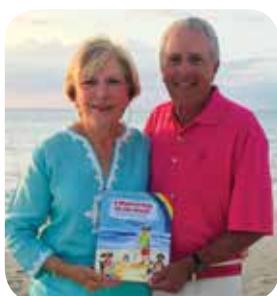
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MARIA SPINA  
PSEG Foundation Program Manager

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*Pictured here is a therapeutic small group aquatics program which focuses on fundamental swimming skills, becoming more confident in the water, and water safety specifically designed for children with special health care challenges.*



## Donor Spotlight: Fran & Nick Boccella

Nearly 30 years ago when Fran and Nick Boccella first moved to NJ with their young family, they were invited by friends to attend one of Children's Specialized Hospital Foundation's golf outings. Fran was thrilled to find an activity they could do together, and they were immediately drawn to the hospital and the children it serves.

Once Fran walked onto the Long Term Care unit in Mountainside, she recalls "it was love at first sight. I knew it was the place I needed to be." From that day forward, Fran and Nick became supporters in every way. They devoted countless hours to bringing joy to the kids living in Long Term Care – whether throwing an annual beach party, or their special 'Twas the Night Before Christmas' reenactment or helping to raise funds for special equipment needs, Fran and Nick have been there to support the kids and Children's Specialized. For Nick, being able to see the impact that this has on the lives of

the children and, in particular, knowing they are helping local NJ kids is most meaningful for him.

Fran, a former teacher, recently fulfilled her long-time dream to write a children's book about her friends at Children's Specialized Hospital. ***A Magical Day at the Beach*** chronicles the adventures of clever sea creatures who help bring the beach to kids with special needs who are unable to visit the beach.

"Life is not perfect, yet it's wonderful," said Fran, "and my hope is this book will help spread the words I try to always live by and teach my children and grandchildren every day, If you can be anything, be kind."

Always finding new ways to support the hospital, the Boccellas are selling copies of ***A Magical Day at the Beach*** for a minimum donation of \$25.00. All proceeds from the sale of the book will benefit Children's Specialized Hospital Mountainside Long Term Care program. **If you would like to make a donation and receive a book please email Jessica Arkel at [jarkel@childrens-specialized.org](mailto:jarkel@childrens-specialized.org) to get your copy.**

### A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Children's Specialized Hospital Foundation acknowledges the generous support of its donors. Gifts to Children's Specialized Hospital Foundation ensure that our patients receive the best possible care from the most skilled doctors and therapists.

We would like to recognize the following major donations from September 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019

#### Visionary Society Donors (\$500,000 +)

Costco Wholesale Corp.

#### Benefactor Society Donors (\$250,000 +)

Louise Washington Charitable Remainder UniTrust

#### Leadership Society Donors (\$100,000 +)

Anonymous  
Estate of Roderick Springer  
PSEG Foundation

#### Humanitarian Society Donors (\$50,000 +)

Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies  
Kids Helping Kids, Inc.  
Liam's Room  
Rite Aid Corporation Foundation  
The Willits Foundation

#### Founder Society Donors (\$25,000 +)

American Pile and Foundation LLC  
Anonymous  
Burns & McDonnell Engineering Co.  
Ferreira Construction Co., Inc.  
Henkels & McCoy, Inc.  
Heinz K. Hofmeister  
IHOP Restaurants  
RE/MAX Our Town  
Timothy J. Piazza Memorial Foundation  
Walmart Stores, Inc.

#### Cornerstone Society Donors (\$10,000 +)

Angelo Fiorito Trust  
Anonymous  
Autoland  
Becton, Dickinson and Company  
Burns & McDonnell Engineering Co.  
Central Jersey Spinal Cord Association  
Leona L. DeLiberato  
Audrey Farley  
Jeffrey Fischer  
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Jeffries Shein  
Standish Foundation  
Union Foundation  
The Lucy and Eleanor S. Upton Charitable Foundation  
Frank E. Walsh  
Blanche M. and George L. Watts  
Mountainside Community Foundation



## Thanks to our amazing partners, we raised over \$2,654,743 to support our kids in 2019! Here are a few Highlights...



17 Costco warehouses, 2 depots, 1 business center and 1 packaging center **raised \$858,075** in just one month!



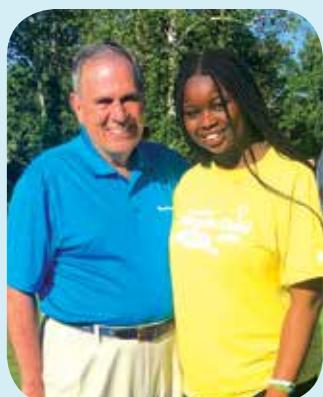
IHOP Restaurants across NJ hosted Free Pancake Day and **raised over \$115,000**. Since 2006, IHOP has raised over \$1.34 million for CSH!



The Making Miracles Radiothon with Shawn and Sue on 92.7 WOBM **raised over \$23,000**!



Collectively, Credit Unions of New Jersey **fundraised over \$58,000**! Elizabeth, NJ Firemen's Credit Union held their 15th and final Playball for Miracles Softball Tournament. Playball for Miracles **fundraised over \$160,000** over the last 15 years!



Speedway became a new \$100,000 partner **raising over \$103,409** for our kids! Pictured here: Alexis Simon with Speedway's former President, Tony Kenney at the annual Speedway Miracle Tournament in Dayton, Ohio.



DQ celebrated Free Cone Day and Miracle Treat Day raising funds for CSH. Thank you to Donna Albanese, the owner of the Plainfield DQ for **donating 50 Blizzard Treats to our kids** for a Blizzard Party with Miss America at our inpatient hospital in New Brunswick!



Seven local Panda Express restaurants **fundraised over \$73,000** for CSH in 2019, increasing their year-over-year fundraising by 43%!



7 local New Jersey high schools and universities participated in the Miracle Network Dance Marathon movement, **fundraising nearly \$150,000** for CSH.



Thanks to the hard work of Marriott's NJ & NY Business Councils, the annual golf tournament **fundraised over \$171,000** for 3 local CMN Hospitals!



Walmart **raised over \$216,000** for our patients, most of it \$1 at a time during their annual fundraising campaign!



Patrizia's Restaurants, who **raised nearly \$40,000** in 2019 for kids like Kaitlyn, pictured here, with owner Lou Maschi.



Children's Specialized Hospital was given a **\$15,000 grant** from the Wawa Foundation to support our emergency transportation vehicles.



Rite Aid celebrated its 25th year as a CMNH partner and **raised over \$93,000** for CSH through their register campaign. CSH was also selected as a recipient of a \$50,000 grant from the Rite Aid Foundation.



Miracle Offices and their Miracle Agents all over NJ **raised nearly \$230,000** through the Miracle Home Program and by hosting fundraising events!



# Autism Awareness: Teaching Tolerance and Changing Attitudes

The Autism Program experts at Children's Specialized have developed child-focused and developmentally-appropriate, practical tools and resources to encourage understanding and participation in various aspects of life including health care, safety and life skills.

By creating these tools and resources, with the help of funding from Kohl's Cares, this team of therapists, nurses, doctors, educators and researchers is striving to help children with special health care needs and their families communicate, interact, participate and feel accepted, understood and valued in all settings: home, health care, recreation and afterschool programs, schools and the community.

Everyone has a diverse mix of strengths, challenges, interests and abilities and it is important to see beyond disabilities and other perceived differences, to treat all children and their families with understanding and respect.



Below are some key points on acceptance that everyone should consider in their daily lives:

- ✓ There is no "normal"
- ✓ Do things "with" people with disabilities, not "for" them
- ✓ It's OK to ask questions
- ✓ Replace "We can't" with "How can we?"
- ✓ Recognize similarities rather than differences
- ✓ Be empathetic rather than pitying or patronizing
- ✓ People need to be included in decisions that affect them
- ✓ Realize that at some point in our lives, each of us is likely to have some type of disability whether based on birth, accident, illness or aging

Jill Harris, PhD, Director of Research Development and Coordinator of Autism Services at Children's Specialized Hospital likes to share this quote when discussing acceptance, **"Changing our attitudes and the environment, instead of trying to change people with disabilities, must be our mission if we ever hope to create a society where everyone is valued and everyone belongs."** (Kathie Snow, *Disability is Natural*)

For more resources and information for families and caregivers with children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, please visit the Kohl's Autism Awareness Hub at [www.childrens-specialized.org](http://www.childrens-specialized.org).

## SAVE THE DATE

May 11-31

Wawa Scan Campaign

June 1-23

Dairy Queen Balloon Icon Campaign

July 23

Dairy Queen Miracle Treat Day

July 27

Fourth Annual Golf Open

September 10

Magic 98.3 and WCTC-AM Radiothon

September 13

Walk n' Roll

November 1

TCS NYC Marathon

November 11

Extra Life Game Day Marathon

# Photo Gallery



Many thanks to the Hess Corporation and former New York Yankee outfielder Johnny Damon for delivering brand new 2019 Hess Toy Trucks to our patients in New Brunswick.



Employees from McPhee Electric made and donated thoughtful activity bags for our patients and their families.



The PSE&G Holiday Party was a wonderful evening for our kiddos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, food, music, decorations and gifts!



New Jersey Devils MacKenzie Blackwood, Kevin Rooney and Pavel Zacha visited with patients and their families at our inpatient hospital in New Brunswick.



Westfield PBA Local 90/90A stopped by Long Term Care in Mountainside to deliver a generous donation from No-Shave November.



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Mountainside, NJ 07092

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## Mission

Children's Specialized Hospital Foundation's mission is to inspire and secure philanthropic support for Children's Specialized Hospital, the preeminent provider of specialized healthcare for children and adolescents facing special health challenges—from chronic illnesses and complex physical disabilities like brain and spinal cord injuries to developmental and behavioral issues like autism and mental health.

Working with parents and families, award-winning doctors, researchers and pediatric specialists, Children's Specialized Hospital depends on the generosity of donors to discover new innovative ways to help more children overcome their health challenges. All donations go directly to help pioneer new specialized children's care and serve more children in need.



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Follow us on Instagram @ChildrensSpecNJ



Watch Children's Specialized Hospital on YouTube

To learn more about  
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Foundation

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Email: [foundation@childrens-specialized.org](mailto:foundation@childrens-specialized.org)  
Call: 908-301-5561



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