

leading

THE WAY

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WORKING ERIE'S POTENTIAL

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*HHF partnerships within the community actively contribute to workforce development. Pictured are **Dr. Onjanette Jackson, Jim Donnelly, Daria Devlin, Bishop Dwane Brock, Boo Hagerty, Karen Monahan, and April Murphy.***

WORKING ERIE'S POTENTIAL

UPMC Hamot is building a workforce powered by diversity and creativity.

There is no greater challenge facing health care institutions today than the need for workforce development. An existing national shortage of health care workers, with special attention to nurses, has been intensified by the effects of a two-year pandemic. Hamot Health Foundation recognizes a serious responsibility to contribute to the quest for solutions.

At the same time, a diversified workforce is imperative. Diversity creates increased cultural competency in health care to meet the needs of people of all backgrounds. The demand for more health care workers in a diversified workforce represents dual objectives that can potentially benefit from the same strategies.

Hamot Health Foundation is deeply involved in workforce development efforts happening here and now in the community. Creativity is our friend and partner in this critical endeavor. Three creative organizations with whom HHF is aligned serve as prototypes of good ideas gone right. The mission of each entity is distinctive and offers a unique entry point into the workforce.



Vision: Sufficient and culturally competent nursing workforce to meet the needs of UPMC Hamot into the future. Solution: Creation of the UPMC Jameson School of Nursing at UPMC Hamot.

UPMC | SCHOOLS OF NURSING

UPMC Jameson School of Nursing at UPMC Hamot

How do you deal with the enormous challenge of bringing on nurses to your workforce during a nationwide nursing shortage exacerbated by a curveball pandemic? If you're UPMC Hamot, you create your own school of nursing.

Despite the major hurdles of funding, location, faculty, and state board approval, UPMC Hamot met the nursing crisis head-on with the creation of a nursing school based in and accessible to our community. Piece by creative piece, a strategic plan shifted the dream of a pipeline school of nursing into reality.

Ultimately, UPMC Hamot would partner with UPMC Jameson School of Nursing as a satellite campus. A space to renovate through grant funding provided a site for the school in the Wayne Building on Erie's east side, neighboring with like-minded Erie Center for Arts and Technology. This location is a symbolic statement of diversity that will eventually be manifested in diverse graduate nurses.

HHF's involvement and passion for the school of nursing has been in place since before day one. Deeply involved in community health and Erie's east side causes, HHF helped to connect the dots in every phase of the school's rollout. Seeing that the school of nursing could at once bring light to multiple dire community needs — workforce development, diversity, and poverty — the foundation has pledged to find financial assistance for every enrolled student. To that end, the fundraising team at HHF works tirelessly.

UPMC Jameson School of Nursing at UPMC Hamot opened its doors in August 2021 and is set to graduate its first class in December 2022. Over 60 nurses will accept

nursing diplomas; over 40 have already signed on with UPMC Hamot and more are expected to follow suit. Initial reviews portray a clinically rich and challenging program with an incredibly strong curriculum, faculty, and overall learning experience. Graduates are eligible for tuition support to transition directly into a BSN program either virtually or through Gannon University.

As for workforce development, the numbers tell the tale. The 16-month program is capable of producing 300 registered nurses within a 30-month time frame. The significance of these numbers cannot be overstated.

Karen Morahan, director of the Jameson School of Nursing at UPMC Hamot, explains the connection between workforce development and diversity. "Our school has the most diverse student body within the UPMC Schools of Nursing system, drawing students from the surrounding community. More than half the students are now employed in patient care roles at UPMC Hamot, and all are guaranteed future employment as registered nurses. Many have been waiting for a program like this to come to Erie as a means to knock out disparity and generate professional opportunity."



The 2022 Lincoln Scholars are recognized for outstanding academic achievement and presented with generous scholarship awards.



Eagle's Nest Employability Initiative

HHF is a proud supporter of the Employability Initiative through Eagle's Nest Corporation (ENLC). Originally co-authored in 2015 by Bishop Dwane Brock of ENLC and Jim Donnelly of UPMC Hamot, the Employability Initiative is a mutually beneficial partnership that creates a pathway to jobs for the at-risk community. The belief is that jobs hold the power to introduce hope and opportunity.

"Eagles" enter the program following a careful selection process drawing on qualified applicants from vulnerable populations. Commonly held negative connotations associated with "at-risk" go out the window. This is not about bad kids living in the wrong zip code. Anyone can be at-risk if they find themselves in the wrong situation at the wrong time. Poverty, low academic profile, and family instability are all possible factors, among others.

Those chosen to participate in the program receive a stipend to undergo soft-skills training provided by ENLC. Eagles learn about work culture — responsibility, punctuality, attitude, and more. Life skills are also presented to better equip Eagles to navigate life. This helps them leave their problems at the door and perform their jobs with professionalism.

Next up is job skills training at UPMC Hamot involving a paid four-week shadowing experience. Training opportunities are many and varied such as patient care technician, transport, dietary, front desk, risk management, supply chain, telephone operator, and environmental services roles. At the successful completion of job skills training, Eagles are invited to apply for employment. A new pathway has led them to this point.

Positive outcomes ripple throughout the community. Eagles gain experience with which to build resumes. Prior, many could never imagine themselves fitting in at a prestigious organization such as UPMC Hamot. And yet, they now find themselves accepting a position there. Their lives begin to stabilize and transform.

On the hospital side, a valuable pipeline is created that provides qualified and needed applicants. Over time, an increased dimension of diversity to the workforce is realized. Beyond that, a networking effect influences the social circles of successfully hired Eagles, bringing in more applicants and generating even more hiring.



*Patient care technician **Aysha Gore** was among the first cohort of Eagles at UPMC Hamot. Aysha loves interacting with patients and is studying to enter the UPMC Jameson School of Nursing at UPMC Hamot. Stability and growth make it possible to shape a better life for herself and her child.*

The success of the first Employability Initiative cohort established a momentum that continues to this day. Currently, the 17th cohort is on site and in training at UPMC Hamot. Many original Eagles are still employed by the hospital. Others have gone on to college.

After seven years of deep partnership with UPMC Hamot, the Employability Initiative is paying dividends — 242 Eagles have completed the job training and UPMC Hamot's workforce has approximately tripled in its representation of people of color. If interest in the program signals success, hold onto your hat. The Employability Initiative has well over 800 active applications on file.

According to ENLC Executive Director Onjanette Jackson, DBA, "honest conversation" between partners keeps the program running at top performance. There is always a keen awareness that each cohort is paving the way for the next.

The success of the Employability Initiative program has not gone unnoticed outside the Erie community. Lauded at the UPMC corporate level, it is touted as a successful model for workforce development and diversity. UPMC Hamot has also presented the program at various conferences, including a national audience with the American Association of Nursing Leaders (AANL).

JIM DONNELLY, CHIEF NURSING OFFICER AND VICE PRESIDENT, PATIENT CARE SERVICES

His secret to success?
React. Respond. Adapt.

As chief nursing officer and vice president for patient care services, Jim Donnelly seemingly has his hands in everything at UPMC Hamot. Wherever there is patient care, he has ultimate responsibility.

One has to wonder how a person manages the stress and strain of this level of responsibility. His coping mechanism is to the point and formulaic. “React. Respond. Adapt.” Drilling down on “adapt,” Jim deflects attention from himself. “It’s just what you do.”

Jim brings a fierce yet calm intelligence to any discussion, quickly revealing his natural leadership. He has a deep well of compassion experienced by many. A competitive ultra-marathoner, Jim demonstrates fine-tuned endurance. And what about that sly sense of humor? Asked about his goals, he jokes in response, “I’ve met all of my goals. Done.”

Director of Nursing Administration April Murphy provides insight into Jim’s leadership style. “Jim encourages nurses to maximize their potential by balancing autonomy with support. He allows and expects us to be creative in finding solutions to challenges. As a leader, Jim is transformative, transparent, and all-in. You won’t find him in his office, but rather walking the halls and engaging with staff to better understand the hospital environment on any given day.”

In terms of collaboration, Jim is a dream partner to Hamot Health Foundation. Jaimee Black, vice president of operations, explains. “Jim’s contributions are invaluable. Involved in every possible facet of patient care, he engineers initiatives that interface with the community and drive UPMC Hamot to excellence. Jim’s alliance and engagement equip HHF to support complex hospital priorities with precision.”



*A respected leader at UPMC Hamot and throughout the community, **Jim Donnelly** seeks out creative strategies to build a diverse and qualified healthcare workforce.*

“Eagle’s Nest, ECAT, the school of nursing, and much more. None of it would be possible without them. Hamot Health Foundation is at the core of our success.”

— Jim Donnelly, Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President, Patient Care Services

Jim’s many contributions to our hospital and community have also been philanthropic in nature. In honor of his late wife, he established the Dale Donnelly Endowment Fund, offering breast cancer education and support as well as employee scholarships. Likewise, Jim is a major contributor to the United Charities fund at HHF, providing relief and aid to coworkers in their time of need. He has been an integral supporter and consistent friend of the foundation throughout his entire career at UPMC Hamot. The epitome of selfless giving, Jim serves as an inspiration to all.

Within the walls of UPMC Hamot, Jim has known life and death in his own family. It’s also where he has felt empowered to enact his vision to serve the community. Today’s UPMC Hamot has taken years to build and Jim can identify with great personal investment. For him, these are all binding experiences that over 23 years have created a singular and powerful memory of the institution.

Jim takes pride in the hospital’s relationship with Hamot Health Foundation. Leadership is aligned and synchronized in working on the same thing at the same time. He has been around the block enough to know such symmetry is not commonplace. “Eagle’s Nest, ECAT, the school of nursing, and much more. None of it would be possible without them. Hamot Health Foundation is at the core of our success.”



***Jim Donnelly** “relaxes” in his life outside the hospital as an ultra-marathoner.*



Erie Center for Arts and Technology (ECAT)

Located in the heart of Erie's east side neighborhood, ECAT is a nonprofit educational arts and career training facility with a culture that focuses on people as assets, environment, and creativity. Hamot Health Foundation provides grant funding to ECAT in anticipation of a specialized pipeline to help fulfill staffing needs at UPMC Hamot.

The latest exciting news out of ECAT is full licensure from the Pennsylvania Board of Education to open a certified medical assistant training program. The inaugural cohort is underway and experiencing a safety net fully designed to steer students to success.

Details revealed in driving that success are astounding. Various forms of funding allow ECAT to offer the training program at zero cost to students. Tuition and supplies, including use of a laptop for the online curriculum, are free of charge. According to Executive Director Daria Devlin, the absence of student debt is what sets this program apart. Affordability presents no barrier.

A low teacher-to-student ratio ensures that students receive close attention throughout the intensive training. This helps to mitigate the anxiety of long prior absences from the classroom. Trust-building becomes the order of the day and helps in preparing students for real-world experiences.

Obstacles to student success are dealt with mid-training by dedicated support staff. Childcare, past trauma, language skills, learning disabilities, and more are real and present obstacles. At ECAT, these types of threats must go up against a purposeful and determined support staff.



These ECAT students are training toward a career as medical assistants. They experience a unique and protective training culture to prepare them for success in a proven job market.

ECAT has taken the extraordinary step of recruiting local employers to vet the program's curriculum. This involves employers at ground zero and confirms that the established training will produce the skills they want to see in their employees. The aim is to see the student all the way through to endpoint success on the job.

While there is no cost, the training does demand full commitment from the students. The program becomes their job and keeps them in the classroom for 30 hours weekly of intensive training over seven months. Commitment is the cost of the program and also each student's avenue to personal ownership.

The road may be challenging, but the rewards are worthwhile. Medical assistants are in high demand with plenty of opportunity to work in various settings. Graduates will be motivated to accept positions locally and contribute to the community that gave them a chance. UPMC Hamot looks forward to filling medical assistant openings with ECAT graduates.

A mix of backgrounds and experiences is welcome in the program and serves to enrich the experience. Interest is running high and prospective students are already seeking placement in future cohorts.

"ECAT is here to make a difference in our Erie community. We've adapted our program to meet the needs of Erie's workforce and of those seeking employment. We're here to provide life-changing opportunities for living-wage careers that benefit our local economy. The fact that we can offer these programs at no cost and wrap them in supportive services is what makes this program so exciting," says Daria Devlin, executive director of ECAT.



ECAT emphasizes commitment, self-worth, and strategies for real-world experiences. Trainees complete the program unfettered by student debt. Pictured is a ribbon-cutting ceremony in September 2021.



STRONGER THAN EVER



Durability — Thy name is UPMC Hamot Aid Society.

It's June 1881 in Erie, Pennsylvania. Imagine the sitting room parlor of local luminary Sarah A. Reed. She is joined by other thoughtful women arriving in horse-drawn carriages and dressed in the fashions of the day, including requisite bustles. They will take up discussion on a serious matter — the formation of The Ladies Union Auxiliary. Preparing Erie's newly established Hamot Hospital for patients is their undertaking. Amongst their plans is the stocking of linens and kitchen supplies to ready the facility. Later in 1906, the formal beginnings of the UPMC Hamot Aid Society would be traced back to this parlor setting and captivating moment in time.

Fast forward to 2022. Meetings are no longer held in parlors and horses are off the roadways. Instead, meetings now roll out online through virtual platforms. Styles are dictated by comfortable fabrics and designs. Perhaps most shocking of all, men have infiltrated the ranks.

UPMC Hamot Aid Society has evolved from a smallish clutch of women into today's thriving and thoroughly modern organization of over 150 volunteers drawing from all walks of life. And yet, not everything has changed with the times. Indeed, the social-minded mission of actively supporting Hamot Hospital — now UPMC Hamot — is not only alive and well, but stronger than ever.

UPMC Hamot Aid Society is an energetic, caring, and responsive organization that specializes in service and compassion. Their mission drives them to support the needs and initiatives of UPMC Hamot through service, fundraising, and education. Their work begins at Hamot and ends in the community. As Hamot Aid leader Sally Gearity puts it best, "Hamot Aid is how I take care of my community."

Each year, the organization provides thousands of volunteer service hours to UPMC Hamot and its affiliates. Volunteers can choose from a full slate of over 12 service lines, which are coordinated through the Patient Services

Department. Specific roles range from acting as guest specialists to administrative support to assisting nurses with nonclinical tasks and more. Throughout the hospital, Hamot Aid volunteers are recognized as next to saints for their helpful assistance. Hospital executives, including President David Gibbons, know them by name and are closely involved with activities of the group.

The ability to financially support hospital initiatives is a role that Hamot Aid cherishes. They're behind the smaller touches you see at UPMC Hamot, including teddy bears for pediatric patients and sleep sacks for infants. But make no mistake about it — they are a powerhouse when it comes to major initiatives. Hamot Aid pledged and delivered on a major contribution to help make the UPMC Jameson School of Nursing at UPMC Hamot a reality. Just as important, Hamot Aid helps to fill seats at the school through scholarships and as part of their broader commitment to medical education.

The durability and irrepressible spirit of Hamot Aid has been tested and proven. As a precaution at the start of the pandemic, volunteer service within all UPMC facilities systemwide was paused. However, inertia does not go over well in the Hamot Aid universe. Volunteers remained vital by helping to schedule vaccinations over the phone and by seeking any possible opportunity to be helpful.

Two years later, Hamot Aid volunteers are back in the hospital with a renewed light and a one-third growth spurt in membership. Hamot Aid Chair Jane McQuillen attributes such allegiance and growth to the opportunity to serve others made even more salient during a pandemic.

UPMC Hamot Aid Society is an inclusive organization. Like-hearted men and women of all backgrounds are invited to apply and experience the fulfillment of meaningful community service.

For more information about becoming a UPMC Hamot Aid Society volunteer, visit HamotHealthFoundation.org/volunteer.

FOCUS MATTERS

BOARD SPOTLIGHT

LA Feltz

Focus is imperative

“Sometimes when you’re everywhere, you’re nowhere.” This wisdom was dispensed to Lorianne Feltz by a good friend years ago. It stayed with her and has helped to shape a belief in strategic focus. Apparently, it’s working. As executive vice president of claims and customer service at an esteemed organization such as Erie Insurance, who could argue with her success?

In the same vein, tremendous focus is what attracted LA (as she is best known) to Hamot Health Foundation. She finds the organization responsibly strategic. “HHF is clearly focused on what they are trying to accomplish. They take the time to define the specifics of their goals and outcomes.” In her mind, such focus and discipline make HHF stand out amongst nonprofits. At the same time, she has confidence that every project brought before the board will be meaningful because it is the fruit of intense focus.

HHF projects she loves

LA’s own values and community pursuits align with those of HHF. Of utmost importance to LA is education, harkening back to the teaching careers of both her mother and grandmother. To honor their contributions, she gravitates to HHF scholarship projects, believing that education has the power to build and transform lives.



HHF board member **LA Feltz** zeroes in on her community.

“HHF is clearly focused on what they are trying to accomplish. They take the time to define the specifics of their goals and outcomes.”

— LA Feltz, Hamot Health Foundation Board Member

This commitment to scholarship is also inspired by a deeply personal experience. When LA’s mother, Patricia Jo Feltz, fell ill in 2018, the family was forever moved by the care received at UPMC Hamot from the nurses and critical care ICU team. Compassion throughout her mother’s terminal illness now lives on in a scholarship fund established for health care workers seeking critical care training.

The difficult period of her mother’s illness impressed upon LA another aspect of HHF’s work. She now stands committed to projects that involve meeting health care needs on a local platform. She understands the strain on families to obtain care for loved ones in big cities out of daily reach. For LA, establishing access to world-class health care right here in Erie through UPMC Centers of Excellence is a must.

HHF's attention to Erie's east side neighborhoods also motivates LA. While excited for opportunities to connect with all community projects, east side efforts hold special appeal. The reason is simple. After moving from Canton, Ohio, to Erie during grade school, her family settled there, where the majority of her growing-up years took place. These Erie roots are close to LA.

Boo Hagerty, president of HHF, values the perspective LA brings to her role as a board member. "LA demonstrates real commitment to community causes. Determined to use her considerable latitude for good, she is sensitive to the social landscape of the community, giving generously of her time, energy, and resources. As a leader, Lorianne is poised and caring. I am thankful always for her dedication to service on the Hamot Health Foundation Board of Trustees."

A family rooted in giving

LA grew up in a family that modeled giving and normalized it as a way of life. While her grandmother Zeno volunteered with inner-city schools, her parents demonstrated the joy of giving. As a poor college student working odd jobs to make ends meet, she told her father that she had the option of giving to the United Way through payroll deduction, but couldn't afford to do so. He lovingly snapped her out of herself. "Oh, yes you can. Give a little and you'll never even miss it."

That life lesson was a beginning. What seemed to her a small, inconsequential donation eventually led her down a path of giving not only financially, but also through acts of service. As her career grew through the years, so did her community involvement. It became her habit to give of herself however she could and to the extent that she could. Just as the example had been set for her, LA now endeavors to do the same for her nieces "right from the start."

Women supporting women

There is no question that LA has been heavily influenced by strong women in her family. When it was time for her mother to go to college, her grandmother Zeno decided it was time for her to do the same. They both graduated and held distinguished teaching careers, leaving an indelible imprint on many lives.

After family, the second greatest inspiration in LA's life has been women. She rejects the negative notion of women competing against each other. Rather, she promotes the idea of women supporting women to the great benefit of all.

LA herself has been buoyed through life by a tight band of female friends. They support one another through all that life has to throw at them. And in her work environment, women have cheered each other on with enthusiasm to become the best versions of themselves.



LA balances her busy work life with activities that match her bold love of adventure — including rappelling.

Leadership

LA has been with Erie Insurance for 33 years and provides oversight to 3,600 employees. Her leadership philosophy compels her to create an environment that generates success. On this note, LA is passionate. Success is available not only for the organization, but also for each individual within.

In keeping with her personal commitment to giving, LA is quick to express her gratitude for Erie Insurance's generous matching contribution program. Proud of the organization's genuine demonstration of caring through community giving, she also values a prioritization on customer service and treating people well.

Getting to know LA

LA is a devoted daughter, sister, and friend. She is a successful professional with a huge heart for her community as well as an advocate for women. But there's still more to LA Feltz. She is an adventurous soul who loves to travel, paraglide, and take (safe) leaps off tall buildings. She was among the first to rappel off the Renaissance Centre building in downtown Erie.

HHF is hardly the only cause to benefit from LA's energy and love of community. She extends her compassion to multiple organizations throughout the area including the United Way, Erie Philharmonic, and Erie Women's Fund. She is also involved in animal-related causes with a particular passion around rescue animals. Her dog Winnie is a mixed-breed senior rescue and LA's faithful companion.

A piece of wall art prominently displayed in LA's office view is a daily nudge that reminds her of what matters in life. Large letters fill up the frame and spell out the word "COMPASSION." Focus is her means in life and compassion is her motive.



Ivor Knight, PhD, director of the Biomedical Translational Research Center, is pictured in the translational research lab (in AMIC).

NEW BEHREND FACULTY, LABS EXPAND MWRI-ERIE PARTNERSHIP

A new biomedical research lab at Penn State Behrend is accelerating the study of ERK, a cellular signaling pathway that is hyperactivated in 90% of all human cancers.

The 2,200-square-foot research facility includes an advanced microscopy lab where Jeremiah Keyes, PhD, an assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, uses a scanning confocal microscope to produce high-resolution 3D views of cancer cells. He's looking for a way to inhibit the migration of cancer cells without fully disrupting the ERK pathway, which is essential to other life functions.

A wide-field microscope with a 100X magnifier provides a different view, allowing Keyes and the students on his research team to watch cells migrate in real time.

"These microscopes are at the cutting edge of live-cell microscopy," Keyes said. "I don't know of another undergraduate institution that has anything like them."

His work in the lab supports Behrend's partnership with Hamot Health Foundation, Magee-Womens Research Institute in Erie, and UPMC. The \$26 million women's health initiative is bringing locally focused clinical medical research trials to the Erie region.

Two years after the launch of the initiative, the MWRI-Erie partnership, like the cancer cells Keyes is studying, is expanding.

Behrend is the academic and translational research partner of MWRI-Erie. The college has opened two new labs that support the partnership: the biomedical lab in the Advanced Manufacturing and Innovation Center (AMIC), and an advanced molecular biology teaching lab in the Otto Behrend Science Building. Behrend students are contributing to research in both labs.



Kevin Slye, a senior science major at Behrend, is looking at cancer cells through a scanning confocal microscope in AMIC.

“These research spaces provide an opportunity for our students to be part of collaborative research teams,” said Ivor Knight, PhD, director of the Biomedical Translational Research Center at Behrend. “That’s a game-changer, in terms of career preparation. But the real impact will be felt outside the labs: The work we do here will directly contribute to new treatments and medical interventions that will improve the health of women in and beyond Erie.”

The labs were funded by an \$1.1 million grant from Hamot Health Foundation and The Erie Community Foundation. In addition to microscopy, they provide the space and instrumentation needed for cell-culture research, molecular cloning, immunoblot gel imaging, and nanoparticle tracking analysis.

The labs positioned Behrend to recruit two new faculty members with expertise in biomedical research. Keyes had worked as a post-doctoral research fellow at the University of California at San Diego. Ashley Russell, PhD, was at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Russell, an assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, studies extracellular vesicles, which allow cells to communicate with one another.

“We needed this infrastructure to attract faculty members who do research on a level that is commensurate with the mission of MWRI,” Knight said.

“Clinical research has to be done in the context of both a clinical and an academic unit,” he said. “Our core capabilities in engineering and the sciences, our experience working with industry partners in applied research and technology translation, and the resources available to us through the larger Penn State research enterprise make Behrend the right fit for this.”



Adam Brooks is a senior majoring in biology at Behrend. He’s shown working with cancer cells in the cell-culture lab in AMIC.

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The college's "open lab" model of learning, in which students and faculty members partner with businesses and community organizations to refine products and services and improve business processes, has broadened the MWRI-Erie partnership. A new round of seed grants is providing research funding for Behrend faculty members with expertise outside of the natural sciences to collaborate with MWRI clinical investigators:

- Samy Madbouly, PhD, an assistant professor of engineering, is working with Amanda Artsen, MD, and Pamela Moalli, MD, PhD, to develop a new polymer mesh that can be implanted in women who suffer from stress urinary incontinence.
- Melanie Hetzel-Riggin, PhD, professor of psychology, and Christopher Shelton, PhD, assistant professor of clinical psychology, have teamed with Megan Bradley, MD, to study the knowledge gap among women diagnosed with asymptomatic bacteriuria — the presence of bacteria in the urine of a patient who has no signs or symptoms of a urinary tract infection.

Beyond an initial \$6 million grant from The Erie Community Foundation, including the lab funding, the MWRI-Erie funders — Hamot Health Foundation, Magee-Womens Research Institute and Foundation, Penn State Behrend, and UPMC — have each committed to investing a minimum of \$5 million to expand medical research in Erie. Behrend already has raised \$3.2 million, which has been matched by Penn State.

Federal funding could have even more impact. MWRI is the largest U.S. research institute devoted exclusively to the health of women and infants. Since 2007, the institute has led the nation in National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding for reproductive health research. MWRI expects to attract up to \$50 million in new funding over the next 10 years.



Madison Jones is a recent Behrend biology graduate. She's pictured doing a western blot analysis in the AMIC lab.

"These research spaces provide an opportunity for our students to be part of collaborative research teams."

— Ivor Knight, Ph.D., Director of Biomedical Translational Research Center

Keyes is finalizing an application for a three-year NIH grant. If awarded, the grant would provide funding for additional staff in Behrend's translational research lab, freeing Keyes and his team to focus on new collaborations.

"At that point, the MWRI research in Erie will snowball," Knight said. "NIH funding is a big benchmark. It will put us in a position to fund fellowships and new faculty positions. What we're doing here will then really expand. It would be a big win for Behrend and for the Erie region."

Photo credit: R. Frank Media for Penn State Behrend.

Hope Needs Help

30 YEARS OF DEDICATION TO THOSE WITH PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Every nine minutes someone is diagnosed with Parkinson's disease (PD), joining over 1 million Americans already living with PD. Annually, 60,000 Americans, including many in our own area, are diagnosed with PD — the second most common neurological disorder after Alzheimer's disease.

Parkinson Partners of Northwestern Pennsylvania, Erie's only nonprofit dedicated to PD, is focused on its mission to encourage, educate, and support those with PD and their families. April marks the 30th anniversary of this vibrant nonprofit.

Thirty years ago, five couples met through Hamot Northshore Neurology. They came to share a common perspective — the absence of local PD resources for patients and families. Turning to their neurologist, James DeMatteis, MD, a team from Hamot was formed to hold an informational meeting in April 1992. The event sparked immediate and strong interest with 125 attendees. Parkinson Partners was born.

Hamot Health Foundation supports wellness programs offered through Parkinson Partners. The program pairs PD participants with supervised OT and PT students to provide additional safety and personalized coaching.



Since then, Parkinson Partners has grown with the help of UPMC Hamot, Hamot Health Foundation, other community partners, generous donors, and many volunteers. As a result of these contributions, local resources are now available, including support groups, educational events, wellness programs, and grants for respite care and transportation.

Parkinson Partners wellness programs are specifically designed for those with PD, addressing challenges while encouraging independence in a safe, supportive environment. The Purposeful Movement and Wellness program, is a unique, collaborative effort with Gannon University Occupational (OT) and Physical Therapy (PT) departments. The program pairs students with wellness participants to provide additional safety and personalized coaching. All activities are designed and supervised by Gannon faculty.

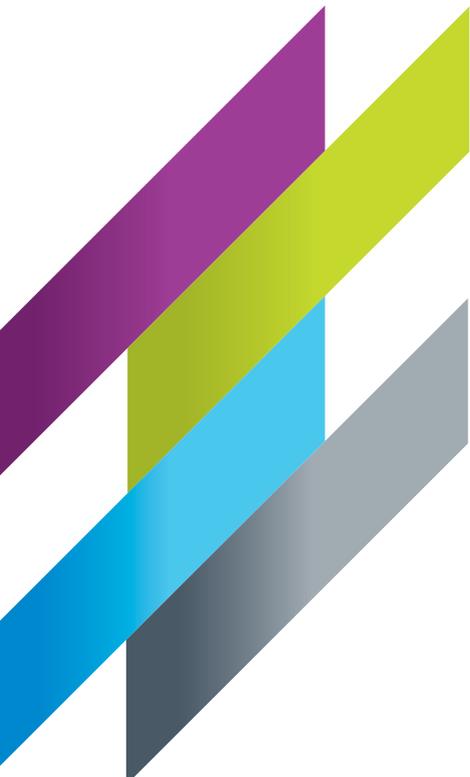


Wellness participant Howard explains, "The class pushes us to go beyond what our minds tell us we can and cannot do." This program has been shared at the World Parkinson's Congress and national, state, and local conferences in hopes that other communities will be inspired to embark on similar endeavors. Parkinson Partners medical director, UPMC Hamot neurologist Dimitrios Nacopoulos, MD, reminds us that "All patients with PD are candidates to benefit from community programs."

Jaimee Black, vice president of operations at HHF shares, "Hamot Health Foundation is honored and privileged to be a long-standing supporter of the important work of Dr. Nacopoulos and the Parkinson Partners team. For many years, our commitment has been to provide resources to serve and empower our local Parkinson's community. We encourage everyone to learn more about this great organization and help us continue this worthy commitment well into the future."



*UPMC Hamot neurologist **Dimitrios Nacopoulos, MD**, delivers leadership and expertise to Parkinson Partners. He encourages community programs to support patients with PD.*



getting to know US

Hamot Health Foundation takes pride in going the extra mile for the Erie community. Whether it's women's health, neighborhood poverty, or the nursing shortage, HHF is driven to act on social determinants of community health and, in turn, improve quality of life in our region. The goal here is to be limitless.

This sentiment holds true when the team at HHF talks about what this foundation means to them personally. Each HHF staff member was asked three questions.

- 1) Why do you love working for HHF?
- 2) What is your outlook for HHF in 2022?
- 3) What is your favorite HHF event?

Here is what they had to say.

Boo Hagerty

1) I love Hamot Health Foundation's flexibility and desire to be nimble. I love that each day we honor the generosity of our donors with a focused strategy of stewarding their investment into the immediate needs of the community. But not just to address a challenge, we dig deep into the root cause of the challenge and work to eliminate it. Our board is second to none in allowing our team to focus on the social determinants of health in our community and meet them head on.

2) I am optimistic about 2022 and beyond. We are focused to address the workforce challenges in health care. We are determined to continue to improve trusted access to health care for **ALL**. We will be resourceful in addressing the challenges of housing and the homeless. We will be creative in working with the leadership at UPMC Hamot to give our health care heroes the tools they need to deliver world-class health care. We will be collaborative with our like-minded partners who seek to find permanent solutions to our community's most pressing health issues. And we will continue to have a clear vision of how, when, and where we will act to improve the health of our community now and for generations to come.

3) My favorite HHF events are our UPMC Hamot Aid Society luncheons. Three times a year the leadership of HHF and UPMC Hamot hosts our volunteers for a thank-you luncheon. It is always a treat to see our volunteers enjoy each other's company and for all of us to recognize their tireless dedication to UPMC Hamot and its patients for over 120 years. The UPMC Hamot Aid Society is the heart and soul of our hospital and although all our events are wonderful and rewarding — these three luncheons will always be my favorite!

Jaimee Black

1) What I love best about working at HHF is the flexibility, uniqueness, and impact of our work. Our Four Cs funding areas allow us to ultimately focus on enhancing our hospital, bettering our community, and changing lives. I also have the honor to work with an incredible team that cares deeply about making a difference. We come to work every day with a mission to lead our community to better health, and even have fun doing it. We have a reputation for taking on challenges, convening partners, and simply getting things done.

2) I feel like 2022 is our renaissance. After a couple of difficult years, there is a renewed energy that I am excited to be a part of. As our focus areas remain constant, we continue to take bigger leaps in tackling important "global" challenges, such as workforce development, homelessness, and women's health research. And, of course, we are so excited to bring back our signature events this year!

3) Although I love them all, my favorite HHF event has to be the Gala. It's a chance to get dressed up and experience a luxurious evening with dear friends and supporters, while all in celebration of the great work that we do throughout the year. I also love the surprise factor(s) that we provide for our guests. And although we are treated to a top-notch meal, I still love the late night (early morning) Taco Bell stop on the way home!





Nick Cianci

- 1) We have a chance to change and save lives every day. 2) We're fearless when we tackle the biggest challenges of UPMC Hamot and our community.
- 2) Big plans for big impact!
- 3) Honoring Mr. Dave Zurn and generations of his family with the dedication of the Zurn Family Atrium in 2021.

Emily Kahler

- 1) I love working at HHF for many reasons, but if I have to pick just one it would be how closely we work with the hospital and our community partners. I think this is a vital part of our mission and it makes me happy knowing we are helping others, whether it be buying a not-so-sexy piece of equipment or purchasing winter boots, hats, and gloves for the homeless. We are doing things we never thought were possible. And it makes my job so much easier working with people who are like family.
- 2) I think that 2022 is going to be another history-making year for HHF. Our name is out there, we are being recognized throughout the community and working with partners we never have before. The relationships that we have made and continue to make are very important to be successful.
- 3) Well, this is a no brainer for me — the Gala. The first year was definitely most memorable for me. This was the year that we opened up the Women's Hospital and I was also nine months pregnant with my first child. I was very nervous. However, with almost every Erie ob-gyn in the room, I knew I was in the right place if I were to go into labor. The way the room was transformed, it definitely didn't feel like you were in Erie, Pennsylvania, on a very cold January evening. From that year on, the Gala just keeps getting better and better. Being a girl who loves to get dressed up and have a good time, I truly enjoy this event the most and look forward to it every year (even with all the work we do to make it so spectacular).



Mark Louis

- 1) I am passionate about the collective work we do at HHF for a variety of reasons. It is exciting to be on a team that is driving impactful projects with creativity and vision, while aligning donors with opportunities to partner with us. I feel fortunate to go out and "tell our story," because we are making a difference in the health of our community, and educating others about our work is incredibly rewarding. Lastly, it is a pleasure to be on a team that collaborates well and is rowing in the same direction. I look forward to coming to "work" every day ... if you can call it that.
- 2) I have a bullish outlook for us in 2022. We are continuing to grow the School of Nursing Endowment, with support from both our Corporators and the community at large. There are also new initiatives evolving, raising the bar through the lens of our Four Cs. We will continue to look for ways to improve the health of our community by remaining inclusive and resourceful in all we do.
- 3) I enjoy the focus of our events, each of which have a unique energy! Whether raising funds for hospice with our annual lighting of the tree on the Hamot lawn, or golfing for the SLM Fund — which helps women with breast cancer — our events build community. Of course, the Gala is the pièce de resistance for me. We gather with 400+ of our friends to celebrate a remarkable milestone for UPMC Hamot, HHF, or something in our community. With a different theme every year, it is always unique, one of a kind, and BIG FUN!



Katie King

1) Short answer — I love the people and I love the work. Long answer — I love the impact that we are making in our community. I love that I get to help people every day and get to be a part of the solution. I love the passion and commitment of our team to solve problems and make people's lives better. I love that we get to ease the burdens of our clinical staff at UPMC Hamot in both large and small ways so that they in turn can help more people. I love that at the end of the day, I can truly say to myself "We are making a difference."

2) I am pumped for what's next in 2022. Our focus has never been clearer. Because of this, I feel we are set up to take on even bigger projects that in the past may have seemed outside our scope. We have found some amazing partners who share our passion and focus. Together, we are getting things done!

3) My favorite event has to be the Gala. This event allows for the most creativity and I love, love, LOVE to be able to surprise our guests each year with something unique, over-the-top, and, most of all, fun! It's a great way to begin our year in celebration of all the great work being done in and around our community.

Michelle Robertson

1) I love working at HHF because of the active work that we do throughout our local community, far beyond the traditional hospital foundation view. At the same time, we are able to fulfill all the "traditional" roles in support of equipment, staff, and volunteers. It is always fun to do BOTH.

2) The 2022 outlook is another strong year of supporting our existing projects such as prevention and recovery support for women and families impacted by substance use disorders, the UPMC Jameson School of Nursing at UPMC Hamot, ECAT, and all the pillars of our strategic plan. There are also some new community-based activities you will likely hear more about this year.

3) Of course, my favorite event is the HHF Open. In addition to being a beautiful event and a great chance to enjoy HHF family and friends, I am also able to play golf, furthering my personal goal of golfing on most days that end in "day" (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday ...).

Drevell Showers

1) I love working for HHF because it allows me to be a part of something bigger than myself. More specifically, it is an opportunity to do pure good and make lasting impacts in people's lives in the Erie community and surrounding areas that will positively affect generations to come.

2) 2022 has already been a year of reinventing ourselves. Having taken a step back to evaluate where we were and where we needed to go as a foundation, we have the right team in place and the confidence to be limitless. There's no question that HHF steps outside of its comfort zone to try and be a part of the solution to the toughest challenges Erie has to offer.

3) Being the newest addition to the HHF team, I haven't experienced every event yet. However, the first event I was a part of was the 2021 HHF Open. So much so that I sprang into action when one of the foursomes dropped out of the tournament. It was a beautiful day to play golf and I was impressed by the assorted drinks and snacks planted throughout the course. I would have to say that the golf tournament has been my favorite event so far. Nevertheless, I'm very much looking forward to my first HHF Gala this fall!



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 22

BOB-A-THON

WHERE: iHEART STUDIOS, ERIE, PA

Hamot Health Foundation and 94.7 BOB-FM radio team up for an all-day radio-a-thon to raise awareness and financial support for the Children's Care Fund. Hear firsthand stories of those in our community supported by this important fund.

◆ For sponsorship opportunities, call Katie King at 814-877-7922 or kingk9@upmc.edu. For details, go to HamotHealthFoundation.org/events.

August 22

HHF OPEN

WHERE: THE KAHKWA CLUB, ERIE, PA



Annual signature golf outing at the Kahkwa Club to support the SLM Breast Cancer Fund. Each foursome includes lunch, gifts for each player, 18 holes of golf with a forecaddie, followed by a cocktail hour and dinner celebration.

◆ For sponsorship opportunities, call Katie King at 814-877-7922 or kingk9@upmc.edu. For details, go to HamotHealthFoundation.org/events.

October 22

GALA

WHERE: BAYFRONT CONVENTION CENTER, ERIE, PA



Annual signature black-tie event to celebrate the impact of Hamot Health Foundation in our community. You won't want to miss the greatest show.

◆ For sponsorship opportunities, call Katie King at 814-877-7922 or kingk9@upmc.edu. For details, go to HamotHealthFoundation.org/events.

November 22

BRIGHTEN THE NIGHT

WHERE: VIRTUAL EVENT

Unique annual fundraiser creating awareness for Family Hospice of Erie and quality end-of-life care.

◆ For sponsorship opportunities, call Katie King at 814-877-7922 or kingk9@upmc.edu. For details, go to HamotHealthFoundation.org/events.

WHAT'S HAPPENING



A

Get a glimpse into some of the other projects we have been privileged to facilitate due to the leadership of our board and the generosity of our donors.



B

A. With the vision of our incredible NICU team supported by funding from the Children's Care Fund at HHF and partnering nonprofit Grady's Decision, we are now able to provide a no-cost place to stay for UPMC Hamot NICU families. Accommodations for families to remain near their infants are a critical and tangible need. UPMC Hamot cares for over 240 babies in the NICU annually at a 17-day average length of stay. Our ribbon-cutting event announced this important benefit to the community.

B. On March 5, the Erie Otters Hockey Club hosted "Hockey Fights Cancer Night" with UPMC Hamot, UPMC Hillman Cancer Center, UPMC Health Plan, and Hamot Health Foundation. Substantial support was raised and donated to the Hillman Cancer Fund to assist local cancer patients and their families with a multitude of needs — including survivorship and wellness programming, financial assistance to patients in treatment, cancer-related research activities, and other challenges related to cancer care in our community.



C



D

C. The pandemic generated a heightened need for our UPMC Hamot employees to de-stress. A new Employee Relaxation Room at UPMC Hamot was funded through Hamot Health Foundation. Our health care heroes can use the space for a quick massage or meditation during break time.

D. UPMC Hamot Aid Society members were thrilled to meet in person for the 2022 Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. Several new members were welcomed, and many were recognized for their years of service with Hamot Aid. We are beyond blessed to have such an amazing group of volunteers serving at UPMC Hamot and its affiliates.



E



F

E. Boo Hagerty greeted nursing student Jasmyne Henry at a scholarship award event for UPMC Jameson School of Nursing at UPMC Hamot. Jasmyne and her fellow classmates are working hard in the hospital-based clinical lab space. They are fortunate to receive nearly 900 hours of clinical training, helping them become experienced nurses upon graduation.

F. April is Donate Life Month. This is a time to remember, honor, and pay tribute to those whose lives have been affected by organ transplantation. This is also a time to educate around the importance of organ donation and living donation. Pictured are transplant advocates Dr. Gregory Beard, Jim Donnelly, and Jennifer Wolfram acknowledging a moment of silence in this year's ceremony. The Ryan's Choice Fund at Hamot Health Foundation provides a variety of assistance to families experiencing the journey of transplantation.



G

G. The Guardian Angel program provides patients and families with a great opportunity to recognize one or multiple caregivers through a gift to Hamot Health Foundation. Our 3 South team was recently recognized by a grateful patient for providing great care, compassion, and service to patients each and every day!



**HAMOT
HEALTH
FOUNDATION**

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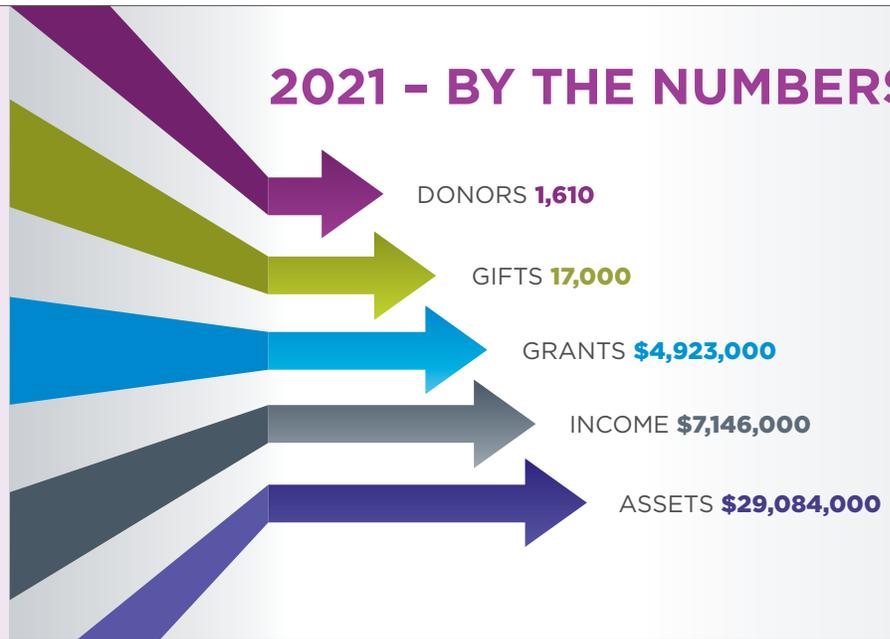
HamotHealthFoundation.org

2021 - BY THE NUMBERS

All of us at Hamot Health Foundation are grateful to our board, UPMC Hamot partners, our community partners, and especially our valued donors.

We look to our **Four Cs framework** to guide our choice of initiatives and maintain the integrity of our mission.

Cutting-Edge Research
Career Development
Community Health
Clinical Excellence at UPMC Hamot



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