

Philanthropic Partners Make Vaccine Access **Better than Normal**

Partnerships have been instrumental throughout Hartford Hospital and Hartford HealthCare's response to the pandemic. From donated PPE to charitable dollars, individuals and corporations alike have helped ensure that Hartford Hospital patients have access to the best possible care and that the hospital's staff is safe. As COVID-19 disproportionately affected some racial and ethnic minority groups, donors turned their generosity to helping ensure that vaccination efforts reached our most vulnerable communities.

Hartford HealthCare's *Better than Normal* broadcast in January raised more than \$1.1 million to help address long-standing systemic health and social inequities that have put many people in minority groups at a higher risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19. The real estate company Shelbourne was among the leading sponsors of the broadcast, donating funds for vaccination efforts.

"Personal health and safety are basic human rights that every individual should have access to," says Michael Siedenfeld, Shelbourne's chief operating officer. "Through our partnership with Hartford HealthCare, Shelbourne is ensuring that Hartford's most vulnerable residents have easy access to the vaccine that is now available."

To make vaccines more accessible in traditionally underserved communities, Hartford Hospital and Hartford HealthCare launched several strategies, including mobile clinics, vaccination vans, and providing rides to vaccine appointments.

"I'm a big believer that you have to take healthcare to the people," said Greg Jones, vice president for community health and engagement, Hartford HealthCare. "If you wait for them to come to you, they'll come to the emergency room."

Jones spent the spring organizing "in-neighborhood" vaccine clinics with community-based organizations. "We're building on entities that have trust in the community," Jones said.

Community partners are assisting with outreach, marketing, and locations to bring vaccines and education to thousands. They include the Northern Connecticut Black Nurses Association, the National Association of Hispanic Nurses, the Hispanic Health Council, the Urban League of Greater Hartford, the Village of Families and Children, the West Indian

Social Club of Hartford, North United Methodist Church, and St. Justin's-St. Michael's Parish, among others.

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At top, Hartford HealthCare deployed two Vaccination vans to make trips to group homes and community centers to expand outreach. Above left, Angela Belfour, a community outreach specialist with the state Department of Public Health, takes questions from Greg Jones, Hartford HealthCare's vice president for community health and engagement, at a clinic at the West Indian Social Club of Hartford. Above right, Ken Barela, CEO of the Hispanic Health Council, speaks at a news conference in March announcing vaccination clinics at the Council's location in Hartford. At left, Paul Yeomans, RN, prepares a vaccine for Yolanda Pabon at a clinic at Windham Heights Apartments in Willimantic in April. Far left, Daniel of New Britain gets a shot at a Connecticut Food Bank /Foodshare distribution site at the New Britain YMCA.



Gifts from Hartford Foundation and Chase Family Advance Vaccination Efforts

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From left are Sandy Chase, Arnold Chase, Rhoda Chase, Cheryl Chase, and Stuart Bear. Through a generous gift from members of the Chase family, a collaboration with Connecticut Food Bank /Foodshare made vaccines available at mobile food distribution sites. Daniel, right, of New Britain, said getting a shot while picking up food at the New Britain YMCA was convenient. "It's helping people that are less fortunate," he said.

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving awarded Hartford Hospital a \$75,000 grant to help ensure the equitable distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine to Black and Hispanic residents in the Greater Hartford region. And the generosity of The Cheryl Chase and Stuart Bear Family Foundation, Inc.; The Rhoda and David Chase Family Foundation, Inc.; and The Sandra and Arnold Chase Family Foundation, Inc., enabled Hartford HealthCare to collaborate with Connecticut Food Bank/Foodshare to remove barriers to the COVID-19 vaccine and healthy food.

"Hartford HealthCare is not going to leave any community behind, and that means continuing to show up in the community and meeting people where they are," Sarah Lewis, vice president of health equity, diversity and inclusion, said in March at a news conference at the New Britain YMCA kicking off the program that made vaccines accessible at food distribution sites.

While COVID-19 is a clear target for disrupting health disparities, Hartford Hospital and Hartford HealthCare intend to address health inequity on a broader scale.

"Prior to COVID, Black and LatinX communities and others were already in a crisis of sorts when it comes to health disparities," Lewis said. "Hartford HealthCare had already established a Department of Health Equity. ... We were already talking about the chasm in life expectancy in neighborhoods that are just miles apart from one another. So, we knew that was a crisis and that COVID would opportunistically take advantage of that."

"What makes me optimistic about the momentum our system is building is the way in which we have looked at the truth of this moment and said, 'OK, the model that we have needs to change now. Let's go out into the community and bring testing where people are, and let's go back there week after week, month after month.'"

Better than Normal funds are helping to address foundational gaps in health outcomes through programs that include education and nutrition.

In Greater Hartford, 1 in 7 adults lacks reliable access to affordable, nutritious food, which puts them at an increased risk for various adverse health outcomes, including heart disease, hypertension, and Type 2 diabetes. The Hartford Hospital Food Farmacy is a prescription-based, proactive approach to improving the health of the hospital's most



vulnerable patients. Opening in partnership with Foodshare later this year in Hartford Hospital's Community Health clinic, the Food Farmacy will offer access to specific healthy food items free of charge. A rooftop garden on Hartford Hospital's campus to grow fresh produce to help stock the Food Farmacy is also being considered.

In addition, with proceeds from the Better than Normal broadcast, Hartford HealthCare has established a scholarship program for minority staff members with associate degrees in nursing seeking a bachelor of science in nursing. Five scholarships of \$25,000 each will be awarded.

If you would like to support programs funded through the Better than Normal that address health inequities, please visit giving.hartfordhospital.org/BetterThanNormal.

Changes in Philanthropy Leadership

Garlick Announces Retirement



After a distinguished 23-year career at Hartford Hospital in which she and her team raised hundreds of millions of dollars for critical programs and services for the hospital and our community, Vice President of Philanthropy Carol Garlick will retire in October.

Through the years, Garlick's work has supported all areas of the hospital and staff. The most recent major campaign, The Campaign for Hartford Hospital from 2013 to 2018, raised \$90 million for the Bone & Joint Institute, Hartford Hospital Community Health on Jefferson Street, the Center for Education, Simulation and Innovation, the Hartford HealthCare Ayer Neuroscience Institute, and the Hartford HealthCare Tallwood Urology & Kidney Institute. Garlick also helped lead the hospital's 150th Anniversary Campaign (1999-2004), which raised \$76 million.

Garlick also has been instrumental in the success of Hartford Hospital's premier fundraising event, the Black & Red, since 1999 and this year's Better than Normal television fundraiser, which raised more than \$1 million to address long-standing racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes.

Garlick started her career at Hartford HealthCare as vice president of philanthropy at MidState Medical Center in 1987.

Bimal Patel, Hartford Hospital president and Hartford HealthCare senior vice president, praised Garlick for her work.

"Along with her leadership in fundraising, Carol has built and fostered relationships with the Hartford community and local business leaders that will help support and sustain our hospital for years to come."

In reflecting on her career, Garlick says, "It has been an extraordinary honor and privilege to serve Hartford Hospital and Hartford HealthCare. I have been enriched by the relationships that I have been fortunate to have with our donors, our community, our volunteers, my colleagues in philanthropy and volunteer services, and colleagues throughout our system."

Hartford Hospital Welcomes Rossini

With Carol Garlick's retirement in October, Lynn B. Rossini has been named vice president, philanthropy for Hartford Hospital. Rossini joined Hartford Hospital in March with more than 30 years of experience in philanthropy, most recently leading the Trinity Health of New England/Saint Francis Foundation as regional vice president and chief development officer. In that role, Rossini was responsible for leading several successful



Carol Garlick and Lynn Rossini

capital campaigns, helping to create state-of-the-art facilities, and transforming the patient experience.

As the hospital welcomes Rossini, she offers her vision of philanthropy's role at the institution:

Q: What are your immediate goals for philanthropy at Hartford Hospital?

A: During the next few months, I will have the privilege of working hand-in-hand with Carol as she prepares for her retirement. I consider this opportunity a blessing for me. In addition, I have always believed that philanthropy is the bridge between good and great, and I look forward to carrying the torch that has been established at Hartford Hospital with our many philanthropic partners. We have witnessed countless ways in which philanthropy plays a critical role in the communities we serve. Our partners make possible capital projects, the purchase of leading-edge equipment and technologies, programs that benefit our most vulnerable communities, clinical trials that help identify new life-saving protocols, and the recruitment of world-class clinicians, to name a few. This fall, we will open the Bliss Building expansion. The state-of-the-art building will offer more critical care beds, operating rooms, a recovery area, and additional MRIs, providing our patients and their families with a more seamless experience.

Q: What lessons can our philanthropic community take from the pandemic?

A: Hartford Hospital's role as a community leader during the pandemic elevated the importance of philanthropy during such a critical period. Our philanthropic partners increased their commitment to our hospitals—looking outside of themselves to have a greater impact on those we serve. Healthcare and Hartford Hospital's response to the pandemic took on a whole new meaning for our donors. We are incredibly grateful for their support.

Q: When can we expect the Black & Red gala to return?

A: We are excited about next year's 31st annual Black & Red, which will recognize the 200th anniversary of the Institute of Living. I am so excited about attending my first Black & Red gala. It is the crown jewel of events in Connecticut. We promise to provide more detail in the coming months as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and our healthcare experts advise us on the protocols for such large gatherings.

Loving Care Comes Full Circle

Hartford HealthCare has played a vital role in many of our lives, from the professionals who cared for us as infants to the first responders there for us when emergency strikes.

Sometimes those personal and professional relationships can be mutually interdependent, as was the case when Dr. Bill Henry—who had devoted his career to caring for children—on his final journey home received the same high standard of care from a former patient.



Shane, an EMT, shares a photo taken decades ago of his first visit with his pediatrician Dr. Bill Henry.

Born in the Bronx during the Great Depression, Bill Henry graduated from Columbia University and Albany Medical College, where he fell in love with Elaine Slivonik, a nurse at Albany Medical. They were married one week after Henry received his medical degree in 1963 and started his rotating internship at Hartford Hospital.

Although his work in Albany inadvertently exposed him to tuberculosis, he persevered, completed his pediatric residency at Massachusetts General Hospital, and served as a major in the U.S. Army in Vietnam. He joined the Hartford Hospital staff in 1969.

Described by contemporaries as a “gentle giant,” Henry engaged with the world around him in an exemplary fashion throughout his life. As recalled by a fellow member of the “Old Guard,” Henry’s deep, soothing voice was an essential feature of their barbershop trio.

Modeling the Rotary ethos “Service above Self,” Bill advised all the students he mentored to “balance career responsibilities with those of your family and to get involved in your community.” In addition to his involvement with the Glastonbury Rotary Club, Henry served on the boards of many local organizations, such as the YMCA, the VNA, the Welles-Turner Memorial Library, and Hartford Hospital.

During his 42 years as a private practice pediatrician in Glastonbury, Henry nurtured strong long-term relationships with his patients and their families. Henry made it his custom to take a photo with each patient at their first office visit. To distract and entertain those young patients during subsequent visits, he started wearing a yellow smiley face button. Over decades, his lab coat became festooned with other buttons—many of which were gifts.

When the pandemic struck, Henry was already dealing with pre-existing health conditions—a vestige of his past tuberculosis and exposure to Agent Orange

in Vietnam. In late March 2020, COVID-19 hit Henry hard, and he was admitted to the Bliss Wing. In early April, he made it home only to return to Hartford Hospital yet again weeks later.

Nearly six weeks after exhibiting his first symptoms, Henry decided it was time to return home to be with his family and transition to Hartford HealthCare at Home.

That final ambulance ride home was an especially painful one for Henry, but accompanying him was a young EMT named Shane. Recognizing Henry’s name, Shane realized that this was the same doctor with the smiley face button who had long ago cared for him as a child.

Throughout that final journey home, Shane provided his former pediatrician the same compassionate, loving care that his deep-voiced doctor had once given to him and his parents. Arriving at Henry’s home, Shane procured a photo from their first office visit, and for a brief, poignant moment, the Henry family witnessed Dr. Henry’s pain subside.

Unfortunately, Henry lost his battle with COVID-19 on May 8, 2020. But the enduring example Henry set for a life well-lived will remain as an enduring gift to all those he served and loved.

An Enduring Charitable Gift

In 2004, Bill and Elaine Henry decided to make a charitable gift to Hartford Hospital that would benefit them for the rest of their lives and ultimately the hospital. At that time, they chose to defer the starting date for the income payments from their Deferred Charitable Gift Annuity to receive a higher annuity rate beginning upon their retirement. In 2017, they made another supplementary gift in exchange for a Charitable Gift Annuity with an immediate annuity payment.

Now that Bill Henry has passed away, the charitable plans he made are still in place. His gifts—the continuing payments to Elaine for the rest of her life and the planned final distribution to Hartford Hospital—will continue for the benefit of all.

At this critical moment in history, perhaps now is a good time to talk with your advisor about the opportunities to make charitable gifts that can work not only to your advantage but to a better future for our communities.

For more detailed information, please visit [PlannedGiving.hartfordhospital.org](https://www.plannedgiving.hartfordhospital.org), where you can find a variety of gift planning strategies.

The Hartford Hospital Philanthropy Department does not provide legal or tax advice, but Pete Congleton, director of planned giving, welcomes the opportunity to discuss where your generosity could have the greatest immediate and lasting impact, similar to Elaine and Bill Henry’s.

The Redeployed HHC Colleagues Answer Call to Duty

Last summer, Jessica Joyce, who typically spends her workday researching and writing grant requests for patient care programs, could not have imagined that she would find herself swabbing noses at a COVID-19 test site in Windham through the fall and winter.

In fact, one of her grant requests was successful in securing funds for COVID-19 testing.

“We received \$400,000 from CHEFA [the Connecticut Education and Finance Authority] to provide free testing in the community to underserved people,” said Joyce, who is associate director of foundation support in Hartford Hospital’s Philanthropy Department. “So, seeing that grant at work has been the most rewarding for me personally. Being able to be in healthcare on the other side of patient care has been great.”

Jessica Joyce



Without a doubt, frontline healthcare workers are the heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic. As our best defense against the most severe symptoms of the

Olivia Gonzalez



Clare Cryar

disease, doctors, nurses, medical technicians, and environmental services staff put fear aside as they faced the highest risk of becoming infected with the coronavirus.

But a challenge on the scale of COVID-19 required fortitude beyond patient-care floors. As the virus spread, subsided, and surged again in Connecticut, nearly 500 Hartford Hospital and Hartford HealthCare staff members left their traditional roles as nurses, physicians, medical assistants, physical therapists, social workers, fundraisers, and other

administrators to help the community cope with the unknown. They worked at COVID-19 test sites—taking registrations, directing traffic, and swabbing thousands of noses across the state. They screened patients, employees, and visitors at hospital entrances. And from the Community Care Center in Newington, they found answers for thousands of callers anxious about COVID-19 symptoms, exposure risks, traveling, quarantining, testing, and vaccines.

Carolyn Bousquet, BSN, Community Care Center lead, said the willingness of employees to help wherever needed has been vital to the success of the community outreach.

“Redeployed staff from so many different entities across all of Hartford HealthCare responded to the call for help throughout the pandemic,” she said. “Hundreds of colleagues came together to accomplish one goal and serve our community in a time of great need. We could not have successfully completed the endeavor if people didn’t come out of their comfort zones to assist the organization.”

Before being called to COVID-19 duty, JoAnne Thomas, LPN, assisted physicians and APRNs at the Counseling Center in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health at the Hospital of Central Connecticut. In September, she began taking calls at the Community Care Center.

“I found the people I worked with very gratifying, and I built some good relationships,” Thomas says. There were challenges in learning new duties, but, she says, “I felt I was still helping people through difficult situations, dealing with the pandemic.”

As of the end of May, Hartford HealthCare teams at mobile sites had performed more than 539,000 tests since March 2020. And as the Community Care Center officially closed at the end of May, it had answered more than 630,000 calls.



Many Hartford HealthCare staff members were redeployed to provide the community with support and guidance during a time of great uncertainty and fear.



The EksoNR Is Here

\$150,000 Auxiliary Gift Supports Purchase of Robotic Rehabilitation Device

After much excitement and anticipation, the EksoNR device, or “Ekso,” has arrived at Hartford Hospital’s 26-bed Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit (IRU). With a gift of \$150,000 from the proceeds of the 2020 Auxiliary Golf Tournament, the IRU was able to fully fund the purchase of the wearable robotic exoskeleton designed to help patients with stroke, traumatic spinal cord injuries, acquired brain injuries, or other types of lower body weakness or paralysis relearn to walk.

IRU staff say the innovative technology will enhance the care therapists provide, helping patients achieve the best possible outcomes. Hartford Hospital joins over 300 rehabilitation centers around the world in helping restore quality, speed, and independence with walking. Hartford Hospital’s IRU is the only inpatient rehabilitation unit in the state with an EksoNR.

Hartford Hospital’s IRU admits over 700 patients a year. Approximately 70%, or nearly 500, have a neurological diagnosis and could potentially use the exoskeleton to assist with gait training. While the device is dedicated to the IRU, the long-term strategy is to acquire multiple devices that could be used in the outpatient clinic setting.

The Ekso enables patients to take many more steps earlier in their rehabilitation stay, even before they are able to move their legs on their own. This results in faster recovery and better outcomes.

Shantel Szymanski, manager with the Neurological Rehabilitation Program at the IRU, says that staff will use the Ekso during a patient’s one-hour treatment sessions and that patients are averaging 600 steps per session. How often a patient uses the device is based on that patient’s ability and individual goals. Some patients might use it daily, while others may use it twice a week and work on other aspects of their recovery on the other days.

Staff members undergo extensive training in using the device as it has numerous capabilities. Szymanski was extremely encouraged in the weeks after Ekso’s arrival.

“It has been great,” she said. “We are still in the learning phase but have had some great experiences so far. The whole team, including doctors, nurses, personal care assistants, food service, and environmental services, get excited

when they see someone walk down the hall with it. Everyone cheers the patient on!

“The last few patients we used it with showed some significant changes to their walking pattern once they got out of the Ekso,” she said. “That’s what it’s all about. We are trying to improve neural connections and maximize nervous system plasticity, or the ability to change. The last man I worked with told me, ‘I can feel my brain rewiring’ as he was learning a new way to walk.”

This amazing new device will be an important member of the IRU team, so staff members want to give it a proper name. Because it is clearly reminiscent of Ironman, Szymanski said, some hospitals actually name their Ekso “Jarvis.” Stay tuned for the final decision!



David MacDonald uses the Ekso to relearn to walk properly with the assistance of Shantel Szymanski, Neurological Rehabilitation Program manager, left, and student Kelsey Kreminec, right.



Visit HartfordHospital.org/about-hh/Auxiliary for more information about the Auxiliary.

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Lawn Signs Keep on Giving

Blue Wave Printing collaborated with Hartford HealthCare to create lawn signs with the message “Thank you. We stand together.” Blue Wave donated all proceeds from sales of the signs to support the Hartford HealthCare COVID-19 Response Fund. Associate Director of Special Events Meghan Bianco, right, and Special Events Coordinator Kristen Lapenta accepted the check for more than \$1,600 in February. Special thanks to Blue Wave owners Scott and Elaine Hagelin for their generous support.



Stanley Black & Decker Gift Honors Voelker

In honor of Joe Voelker’s retirement from Stanley Black & Decker, the company made a generous donation in support of the Behavioral Health Network’s call center response to the pandemic. Voelker, who retired as senior vice president and chief human resource officer in December, is also vice chair of the Hartford HealthCare Board of Directors. At right, in 2018, Hartford HealthCare President and CEO Jeffrey A. Flaks presents Voelker with a proclamation for service on Hartford HealthCare’s Central Region Board of Directors.





Hartford Hospital

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50 Years of Giving the Gift of Life

In April, Hartford Hospital and Hartford HealthCare celebrated 3,800 organ transplants in 50 years. Reflecting on the milestone at a ceremony on April 23 were heart transplant recipients (photo below left) Colby Salerno (left) and Andrew Jones (right); Hartford Hospital President Bimal Patel (below right); and Dr. Robert Schweizer, MD, (at right) founding director of Transplant Program and a member of the team that performed the first transplant (kidney) at Hartford Hospital in 1971.

For more information about the Transplant Program, visit hartfordhospital.org/services/transplant-services.

