SUMMER 2023

GIFT of LIFE Howie's House

UPDATE

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

CELEBRATING 12 YEARS OF HOME AT THE HOUSE

PICTURED L-R: Rick Hasz, President & CEO, *Gift of Life Donor Program*, Troy Ovechka, Jennifer Ovechka, Faith Osborne, LSW, Abby Wells, Talia Giordano, LCSW

For those undergoing the transplant journey, having a place to feel safe and supported during a medical emergency makes a world of difference. While many would agree that there's no place like your own home, Gift of Life Howie's House has been **providing a home away from home for transplant families for over a decade.**

This summer, the House celebrated 12 years of serving the organ transplant community. Since opening in 2011, the backbone of the House has been the generous contributors and dedicated volunteers that continue to support the mission.

As President and CEO, Rick Hasz, says, **"It has been an honor to watch the House grow and change due to the support of this amazing community. The House completes the circle of care that begins when someone gives the gift of life. I couldn't be more grateful to this community for helping fulfill that mission."**

continued on Gift of Life Howie's House page **2**

NO PLACE LIKE HOME, continued from Gift of Life Howie's House page 1

ANNUAL BREAKFAST HONORS GENEROUS COMMUNITY

To recognize their support, a special breakfast was held for the contributors and volunteers that help make the House's mission a reality. The annual President's Breakfast took place on May 12th, and was truly a fantastic morning where lots of laughs, memories, and milestones were shared. The event's theme was "There's No Place Like Home", in honor of the home away from home that the community helps to sustain.

Rick Hasz, President & CEO, along with **Jan L. Weinstock, Chief Administrative Officer & General Counsel,** shared a few words about how integral the generosity of the community is to sustaining the House's mission. They also shared some exciting House happenings and important milestones reached.

Past guest and lung transplant recipient, Jennifer Ovechka, shared the story of her journey while staying at the House, and the amazing things she has been able to accomplish after receiving her life-saving lung transplant. As Jennifer said,

PICTURED TOP LEFT, CLOCKWISE: Jan L. Weinstock, Esq., Jennifer Platzkere Snyder, Esq.; Andrew Bowen, Burton John Mattice; Janice Schwartz Donahue, Karen Barnett, Barbara Katz-Chobert; Lesa Kramer, Catheanne Long

"Since leaving Gift of Life Howie's House, I was able to run a 5-mile race, work full-time as a medical assistant, buy a home, and above all marry Troy, my sweet big guy who never left my side. The House was crucial during my recovery. Every meal at the end of the day was appreciated, and every tidy bed to rest my head was valued."

In its 12-year history, the House has provided thousands of families with the care and services that they desperately rely on while on the transplant journey. **Since opening, it has provided over $12,530,000 in subsidized care, over 316,000 meals, and over 88,457 lodging nights of care.** Families have never been asked to pay more than $40 a night, and no family has ever been turned away due to inability to pay.

PICTURED TOP RIGHT, CLOCKWISE: Elizabeth Juarez, Brandy Gottlieb; Tom Gano, Vivian Gano, Beverly Schneider, Johann Schneider, Dearrdra Hollingsworth, Cynthia London

VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE VALUABLE SUPPORT

Many volunteers help strengthen the mission. **Rosie Lemansky, a donor family member and long-time volunteer,** has been serving at the House since its inception.

"In my 12 years of volunteering, I have talked to so many of the people and they are incredibly grateful for this place. When I work here on Wednesdays, **I see people that have come together that live in different parts of the country, but they're bonded by their situation and they can relate to each other and I think that is such an important part of it. It makes me feel good to know that I am a part of this whole process,"** she says.

Although the journey home after transplant is much more than three clicks of ruby red slippers, the dedication of volunteers like Rosie, along with many generous friends have helped make the House a home away from home for thousands of transplant families.

GIFT OF LIFE EXTENDS ITS GRATITUDE TO THE COMMUNITY
FOR HELPING TO PROVIDE 12 YEARS OF HOME AT THE HOUSE.

NEW! SEAN DUKES Activities Program

The Activities Program at Gift of Life Howie's House was officially renamed The Sean Dukes Activities Program, in memory of Sean Dukes – a two-time heart transplant recipient, dedicated volunteer, board member, and past House guest.

Sean was also a beloved father, husband, and active member of the Gift of Life community. To honor his memory, the House along with the Dukes family partnered to rename and relaunch the program so even more opportunities can be provided to support and engage families at the House.

Gift of Life Howie's House welcomes individuals and groups of all kinds to host activities for guests. For more information and to sign up, visit GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org

GIFT OF LIFE HOWIE'S HOUSE LAUNCHES

GREAT SHELBY SWEEPSTAKES FUNDRAISER

ENTER TO WIN TODAY!

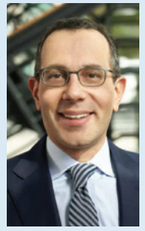
You've got a chance to win a rare **540 hp Shelby GT500KR** – a true collector's car!

This 2008 Shelby GT500 King of the Road is a 40th Anniversary limited production upgrade and is loaded with all the GT500KR performance features. It was also signed by Carroll Shelby! Shelby received a heart transplant in 1990, and a kidney transplant in 1996.

Enter today to win this exceptional car! All proceeds will benefit Gift of Life Howie's House. BONUS! Use promo code NEWSLETTER for 20% more entries.

LEARN MORE AND ENTER TO WIN HERE >>>>>

This vehicle was donated by a current Gift of Life Howie's House Advisory Board member and former transplant surgeon to support the mission.



Caregiver *Life*line Spotlight

by **Dr. Mark Abdelmalek**
Dermatology of Philadelphia
www.dermofphilly.com

Transplant Dermatology – What You Need To Know

Transplant patients can live for many decades after transplantation, and with that remarkable success and progress comes a need for personalized and multidisciplinary medicine that includes specialized dermatology care.

Organ transplant recipients have an increased risk of skin cancer because immunosuppressive medications that prevent transplanted organs from being rejected by the body also lower the body's natural defenses against skin cancer. The most common type of skin cancer in transplant patients is squamous cell carcinoma. The good news is that if detected early, with good care these cancers can be managed and very often cured.

Transplant Dermatologists have a simple goal – no one should die of skin cancer after a second chance at life through organ donation.

How high is the risk of skin cancer in transplant patients?

One in five people without a transplant will develop skin cancer by the age of 70. That story is dramatically different for transplant patients. Transplant patients are 65 times more likely to get squamous cell carcinoma than people without a transplant. They are 10 times more likely to get basal cell carcinoma, the least serious type of skin cancer. And transplant patients are 3 to 4 times more likely to develop melanoma, a potentially more serious type of skin cancer.

Skin cancers in transplant patients can grow quickly and have an increased risk of spreading. That's why having a good relationship with a dermatologist who specializes in transplant dermatology can be game changing. Prompt and expert dermatologic care, which often includes a specialized type of surgery called Mohs surgery for certain skin cancers, is crucial for transplant patients.

What can transplant patients do about the increased risk of skin cancer?

The most important thing to do to lower the chance of skin cancer is sun protection – sunscreen, sun protective clothing, hats and sunglasses. Go ahead and make that hat fashion statement. As with many cancers, early detection of skin cancer is an important factor for preventing serious complications and death. Fortunately, most skin cancers can be easily treated in outpatient settings. The most common way to treat skin cancers in sensitive areas like the face is with Mohs Surgery. Mohs offers the highest cure rate and is the most precise way to treat skin cancer with the best cosmetic outcomes after surgery.

Good transplant dermatology care also offers treatments and medications to help lower the chance of developing skin cancer in the first place.

How often should you see a board-certified transplant dermatologist after an organ transplant?

What time and experience have proven is that routine dermatology care is an essential part of organ transplant care. Every transplant patient should be seen by a board-certified dermatologist around the time of transplantation, not because skin cancer is looming, but to start learning about skin cancer and what to look for.

After that, the frequency of dermatology visits will be based on each person's unique situation. For some, visits are needed every few months. Fortunately most transplant patients do very well with visits to the dermatologist every 6 to 12 months.

If you are a transplant patient, talk to your transplant coordinators and physicians about finding a dermatologist who has an interest in transplant dermatology. You can also look for a transplant dermatologist through the International Immunosuppression & Transplant Skin Cancer Collaborative's "Find a Transplant Dermatologist" tool.

To learn more please watch Dr. Mark's webinar on our Caregiver Lifeline Program webpage at

https://giftoflifehowieshouse.org/bridge-caregiver-support/video-series/

The Caregiver Lifeline Program is supported in part by TD Charitable Foundation. We are thankful for their partnership and generosity.

TD Charitable Foundation

Thank you Home Cook Heroes!

When the families who stay at Gift of Life Howie's House are asked how they feel about Home Cook Heroes—the people who so generously give their time and resources to feed them on their toughest days—sometimes it's hard for them to find the words.

There's just so much they want to say: "Thank you. You lifted a burden off of our shoulders. Sometimes the last thing we want to do when we come home from the hospital is cook, go to the grocery store, or go out to eat. Here, we can enjoy a meal and baked goods with other families and share our transplant journeys."

The Gift of Life Howie's House team gives thanks as well to the entire volunteer community for their generosity and commitment. Volunteers play an essential role in providing transplant families with comfort and hope on their journey.

If you're interested in volunteering for the Home Cook Heroes Program, please visit

GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org

TOP ROW L-R: **TCNJ Women's Basketball Team, Ruth No. 66, Care Crew (AmeriHealth Caritas);** MIDDLE ROW L-R: **Drexel Dragons for Donation, Glowing Up PHL LLC, Friends of Bear;** BOTTOM ROW L-R: **Team Spiers, Organ Recovery Systems**

Thank You for supporting families during their transplant journey.

Contributions of $250 or more received between JANUARY–MARCH 2023

Founders' Circle
[GIFTS OF $10,000+]

New members who have made gifts of $10,000 or more

American Society of Transplantation
Richard Beltz
The Fremont Family and Friends
Estate of Steven Steinberg

Current members who have made renewed gifts of $10,000 or more

CSL Behring, LLC

2023 Family Circle
[GIFTS of $250+] to support the annual fund

HONOR IN PLATINUM [$5,000+]

Ellen and Bernie Gottlieb

CARE IN SILVER [$1,000+]

Raymond and Maria Aviles
Allen and Carol Drucker
Joseph and Beverly Forline
Gift of Life Michigan
Joseph and Donna Glace
Krysta Hankee Memorial Scholarship Fund
Lauren's Foundation
Masonic Blood and Organ Donor Club
Anonymous in memory of John Moretto
Timothy Petersen
The Raymond Family
Mary Ellen Reilly-Tucker
Kim Robbins
Dr. Neal Stansbury
The Marjorie M. and Irwin Nat Pincus Fund
Nancy Tindall

GRACE IN BRONZE [$500+]

Rodney C. Backus
Pam Evans
Barbara Rafferty
Dr. and Mrs. Richard D. Hasz, Sr.
Samuel and Jean Jones
Ronald Hannon Family
William Major
Linda Marrero
Burton Mattice
John and Eleanor Michele
William Minehart
Scott Z. Noye and Family
Arthur and Gail Pasquarella
Ruth Peachey
Rutger's Gang
Barbara Rafferty
Andrea and Sean Reynolds
Richard and Cindy Strup
Dale Tennett
Trappe Family Dental Associates, LLC
Robert G. Walsh, Sr.
Gerard Warner

COMFORT IN COPPER [$250+]

Dr. and Mrs. Horace Barsh
Larry and Diane Beard
Debjani and Satya Bhoumik
Eugene and Patricia Blum
Wendi Borten
Richard Bradley
Buzz Duzz
Faith Carlin
Jim and Karen Carns
Stan and Mary Griffin
Chris and Sharon Crooker
Theresa Daly
Judith Doner
David Greaves
Dr. and Mrs. Mehdi and Christine Haririan
Jefferson Transplant Institute
ICI Mutual Insurance Company
Michael Kawas
Heidelinde Kostemaj
Frank Lambert
George MacKenzie
Caitlin Manney
Marguerite Marcinek
The Stanford Family
Mary McNulty
Michael McVey
Peter and Melanie Melle
Mt. Holly Elks #848
Richard and Karen Quattrocchi
Juanita Reynolds
Sean Rhoads and Keri Fisher
Velma Scantlebury, MD
Kim Scott
Lori Smith
Sons Of The American Legion Squadron #273
Kevin Stump
Christine Tierney
Jacqueline S. Urtecho, MD
Michael and Patricia Venudula
Belarmino and Anna Viegas
John Visconi
John and Sandy Vourtis
Diane Wilson
Andrea and Jeff Woehrle

ITALIC = upgraded member
BOLD = renewed member

We apologize for any errors or omissions and ask that you contact us at 267-546-9819 to report any corrections.

Fundraising Events

In Memory of Brooklyn Krohe
In Memory of Helen M. Detra
Leslie Thompson in Honor of Donald Price

Wish List Drives

Divik Bhasin
Joanna Boven
Michelle Mall
Gregory Nothstein
Jamairah Obeng
Pyramid Court No. 17 / Pyramid Temple No. 1
Trappe Family Dental Associates, LLC
Zeresh 103

Welcome Home CLUB

HEART MEMBERS
Recognizing monthly contributors who donate $21 or more per month

NEW Members

Jermaine Butler
Beatrice McGinty
Diane Wilson

To make a contribution to Gift of Life Howie's House, please visit GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org or use the enclosed envelope.

The official registration and financial information of Transplant House d/b/a Gift of Life Howie's House may be obtained from PA Dept. of State by calling toll free 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

SHOWER THE HOUSE Spring Campaign: GOAL REACHED!

Gift of Life Howie's House would like to thank everyone who supported the Shower the House spring campaign for more accessible guest room showers! Because of your generosity, the goal was surpassed raising over $50,000! These funds will go towards renovating four new showers at the House to make them more accessible for transplant patients who may struggle with mobility issues.

THANK YOU to all those who supported this important campaign! Transplant families appreciate your generosity!

BE A PART of the Gift of Life Howie's House journey, FOLLOW US TODAY!

When you follow Gift of Life Howie's House on social media, you will gain access to inspiring family stories, important House updates, helpful resources, information on the House's supportive services, and more! **Scan the QR codes below and be a part of the House's virtual community today!**

@GiftofLifeHowiesHouse

@GiftofLifeHowiesHouse

@Howies_House

@GiftofLifeHowiesHouse