



GIFT of LIFE  
Howie's House

# UPDATE

## THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

CELEBRATING **12 YEARS OF HOME**  
AT THE HOUSE

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."**

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

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# 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, Dearra 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](http://GiftofLifeHowiesHouse.org)**



## GIFT OF LIFE HOWIE'S HOUSE LAUNCHES

# GREAT SHELBY SWEEPSTAKES FUNDRAISER

## ENTER TO WIN TODAY!



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



## Caregiver Lifeline Spotlight

by **Dr. Mark Abdelmalek**  
Dermatology of Philadelphia  
[www.dermofphilly.com](http://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.*



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

# 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

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Jim and Karen Carns  
Stan and Mary Griffin  
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Judith Doner  
David Greaves  
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Christine Haririan  
Jefferson Transplant Institute  
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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 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



## 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](http://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!**

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# 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](http://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