

MARCH & APRIL 2013

# Careforce

CHRONICLE



## Unconventional Medicine: The Children's Difference

*Also in this Issue*

A Leg of Their Own

Giving Comes Full Circle





## 6 Unconventional Medicine: The Children's Difference

Children's is celebrated nationwide for being an exceptional pediatric hospital. But it isn't just the clinical expertise we offer that keeps patients and their families returning. The past, present and future of Children's is bright, and we owe that to the Children's difference.

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Photo: Child Life Specialist Stephanie Dill carefully selects the Beads of Courage that Zyshun has earned during her stay at Children's.

# The Children's Difference

We say it all the time: Children's is a special place. It's such a special place, in fact, that when my 20-year-old son needed care recently, there was no other choice but Children's.

For our patients and their families, our specialness brings smiles, hope and miracles every day. We care for kids in a way you can't find anywhere else. And we call our special care "the Children's difference."



The Children's difference is real. It helps kids get better, faster. But it wasn't created overnight, and it didn't happen by accident. We've been carefully nurturing our care, our expertise and our specialness for some time now. With every year, we continue to grow the Children's difference.

Some of that specialness comes from kid-focused facilities and equipment. We give patients a kid-friendly experience through warm and sometimes fun touches, like therapy dogs, clowns and child life specialists.

We also offer patients access to experienced clinicians who are experts in their field—clinicians who see some of the highest volumes in the country, sharpening and honing their skills every day through more and more practice.

But the real difference is you.

In my nearly 27 years with Children's, I have learned that there are many different kinds of hospitals—even within the specialty of pediatrics. Some children's hospitals focus on research, while others concentrate on the treatment of critical illnesses and diseases.

For years, though, we have chosen to focus on the Children's difference—a special combination of expertise in care and deep compassion.

And I know that the work we do would not be possible without our people. You dedicate your talent and compassion in equal measures. You're "strong enough to care enough." At the end of the day, you are what makes the Children's difference. You make Children's such an important place for parents and kids.

And whether you're at the bedside or supporting one of our clinical locations, the work you do makes you an essential part of the Children's difference. You represent our Mission to patients and co-workers. In truth, we are all Children's to someone.

**Simply Put: Our specialness wouldn't be possible without your spirit and passion. Because of you, we are able to offer a special kind of care—the Children's difference—to the children of Georgia. We could be any kind of hospital, but I'm glad we're Children's.**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Donna".

### Upcoming Events



#### Autism Awareness Month • April

April is Autism Awareness month, and iconic landmarks around the world will "Light it Up Blue" to show their support for the thousands of people affected by autism spectrum disorders. Join Marcus Autism Center and Autism Speaks in celebrating Autism Awareness Month by replacing outdoor lights with blue bulbs or wearing blue to work. Visit [www.lightitupblue.org](http://www.lightitupblue.org) for more information.



#### Sprint for Cancer • April 21

The 11th annual NCR Sprint for Cancer will take place Saturday, April 21, at 8 a.m. in Dunwoody. This year's event will raise funds for pediatric cancer research at the Aflac Cancer Center. Activities include a 10K road race, 5K run/walk and a Children's fun run.



#### Marcus Autism Walk • May 19

Marcus Autism Center and Autism Speaks are hosting the 2013 Georgia Walk Now for Autism Sunday, May 19, at Atlantic Station. Children's invites all employees to join the Marcus-Children's team. This family-friendly event includes a two-mile walk, activities for children, a resource fair for parents and entertainment. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and the walk will kick off at 9:40 a.m.



► Governor Nathan Deal signs Senate Bill 24 while wearing a Hope and Will necktie.

### Provider Fee Bill Signed by Governor Nathan Deal

The Georgia House of Representatives voted 147-18 to pass Senate Bill 24, which extends the Hospital Provider Fee Agreement until 2017 and gives the Department of Community Health the power to administer the fee.

Children's supported reauthorization of the Provider Fee. Without a reauthorization, the Georgia Medicaid budget stood to lose approximately \$400 million in funding that serves to support the Medicaid program. Fifty-five percent of the payor mix at Children's is Medicaid and PeachCare patients. The Governor in his State of the State address made it clear that if this bill did not pass, he would cut Medicaid rates to hospitals by 20 percent. A one percent reduction in Medicaid reimbursement would equate to a \$4 million loss for Children's in revenue a year.

Several key legislators spoke passionately during the House and Senate floor debates endorsing Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and our Mission. The Provider Fee passed the Senate in January. And Wednesday, Feb. 13, Governor Nathan Deal signed the bill while wearing a Hope and Will necktie that showed his support of Children's.

# Helping Each Other Shine

It's no secret that great things happen every day at Children's, and Careforce Chronicle wants to celebrate your efforts to inspire greatness by living our three Values: Care about People, Passionate about Kids and Dedicated to Better. By offering a listening ear, sharing your expertise, and, ultimately, putting "we before me," you strengthen each other as co-workers. Take a look at some of the wonderful things you're saying about each other through our *Celebrations!* program.

## Passionate about Kids

To: Sonika Tataria, Physical Therapist,  
Rehab Center, Scottish Rite

Thank you for being so fabulous! I constantly hear employees and patients/families commenting on how great you are at what you do and how much they appreciate you! **You always go the extra mile, and it shows!** I thoroughly enjoy working with you.

From: Lindsay Wagner, Child Life Specialist,  
Child Life & Adolescents, Scottish Rite

## Dedicated to Better

To: Laura Mastin, Clinical Educator, Cardiac Stepdown Unit, Egleston

Your strength as a leader truly stood out today as you helped multiple nurses complete tasks, finish up charting and cope with an awful morning. You are always willing to jump in and help, whether it's clinical work or leadership advice. **You continue to be a great bedside nurse, leader and support for our unit.** I am proud to work with you!

From: Lisa Coggin, Staff Nurse, Cardiac Stepdown Unit, Egleston

## Dedicated to Better

To: Andrea Hudacko, Perfusionist, Perfusion Services, Egleston

All of us in Point of Care appreciate the quality and detail you've developed for checking the identity of all OR patients you touch each day. **Teaching new staff is ongoing and sometimes tough, but you're perfect for the job.** A hearty "thank you" from the entire department!

From: Linda Connelly, Medical Technologist, Campus Lab, Egleston

## Care about People

To: Shannon Luetkemeyer, Clinical Nurse Coordinator, Transplant Donor Clinic, Egleston

Thank you for filling in as the liver transplant coordinator last week. It was appreciated and helped us to provide continued excellent care to our transplant patients. **I appreciate that you are willing to help the entire team no matter where there is a need.** Thank you very much.

From: Lori Hall, Manager Clinical Operations,  
Transplant Services Administration, Egleston

## Dedicated to Better

To: Phil Hearn, Team Lead of IS&T Collaboration, The Park

**Thanks for always being a person we can depend on** when we need help with a technical project. I appreciate you getting the three DVDs made quickly for our upcoming event. It's always great to work with you!

From: Amanda Robbins, Senior Program Coordinator,  
Foundation, The Park

## A Day in the Life



### Meet Rebecca

Rebecca Day-Lewis wears two hats at her job at the Scottish Rite Day Rehabilitation program. Part Occupational Therapist and part Driver Rehabilitation Specialist, Rebecca spends her days with patients whose acute or chronic medical conditions, congenital

imperfections, or injuries have caused a loss or impairment of functions that affect their daily activities. As an occupational therapist, Rebecca helps patients relearn their functional skills. She also works with patients in want or need of driver rehab training.

# A Day in the Life ...of a Driver Rehabilitation Specialist

Rebecca Day-Lewis

**1 6:00 a.m.** – Rebecca starts her day bright and early by taking care of her three dogs before heading in to work.

**8:00 a.m.** – Today, Rebecca will be working with Sarah, an 18-year-old who was born with Friedreich's Ataxia, a hereditary disease that causes damage to the muscles and heart. Sarah is in a wheelchair and has never driven a car before. This is Sarah's fifth session, and Rebecca will be taking her to a church parking lot to perform some simple driving maneuvers before they move on to quiet neighborhood streets.

**10:00 a.m.** – Sarah is Rebecca's first patient with no prior experience driving a car. Before they get on the road, Rebecca conducts a clinical evaluation with Sarah and her mom. Rebecca determines arm and leg strength, as well as mobility. She also tests Sarah's visual perception and visual reaction time.

**12:15 p.m.** – After the evaluation, Sarah and her mom take a break for lunch. Rebecca typically eats lunch at her desk, so she can finish up paperwork and prepare for her afternoon sessions.

**1:15 p.m.** – Rebecca and Sarah head out for Sarah's lesson. Sarah works on parking and using her blinker. Then she

completes a few exercises that Rebecca has set up using cones before they move onto neighborhood roads.

**2:15 p.m.** – Usually the driving portion only takes an hour, but because Sarah and her mom have traveled a long way, Rebecca stays out for another hour. "I got really excited when we progressed from the church parking lot to the neighborhood, because she may be able to drive on her own one day. I know how much that independence means to her," says Rebecca.

**3:15 p.m.** – Once they are back in the office, Rebecca identifies any problems and points out improvements Sarah has made. Working with patients has made Rebecca more aware of the different elements of driving. "It can be challenging to teach someone driving skills that come naturally to you," says Rebecca.

**3:30 p.m.** – Next, Rebecca has a family meeting with a patient to discuss 17-year-old Bianca's completion of her therapy. Bianca has hemiparesis, or the weakening of one side of her body, due to a stroke. When she first began rehab, Bianca had trouble using one of her arms, but recently, she has shown marked improvement. Rebecca sends handouts and videos of exercises home with Bianca's family to keep her rehab going.

**4:45 p.m.** – Rebecca completes more paperwork and familiarizes herself with any new patients she'll see tomorrow. The workday is over, but Rebecca still has a busy evening ahead of her.

**6:00 p.m.** – Rebecca swings by her husband's rugby practice before she heads to dinner. Her husband, Scott Stokes, is a wheelchair athlete who plays wheelchair rugby and competes in wheelchair races and track and field events. Rebecca loves to cheer him on.



Rebecca uses the above simulator to help patients develop necessary skills for the road.

**11:00 p.m.** – Finally, Rebecca heads to bed. Tomorrow, she will be working in Day Rehab seeing multiple patients. "I'm very fortunate to experience so much variety in my job on a day-to-day basis. I get to help patients of all ages reach their goals through the driver rehabilitation program and the occupational therapy program." ☈

# Unconventional Medicine: The Children's Difference

Stephanie Dill wears the same necklace to work every day. Strung on a thin, black cord, there are several beads on the necklace, including the letters that spell her name. But there is one, new red-white-and-blue bead that regularly draws compliments. "Where did you get your necklace," a patient's mother might ask, and that's when Dill, Child Life Specialist, smiles and tells her story.

Dill's beads are part of a national program called "Beads of Courage" that awards beads to pediatric patients for milestones, like medical procedures or acts of bravery. Each bead has a different color or pattern, and it tracks or celebrates a patient's progress. "Strung together, the beads create a timeline. They're a simple, powerful way of marking every patient's journey," said Dill.

Although every bead has meaning, there is one that stands out to Dill as especially memorable. A gift from Children's patient, 9-year-old Olivia Harvey, the bead is called the "Olympic Spirit" bead, and it traveled a long way to get to Dill. Carried by Olympic athletes during the Summer Games in London, the Olympic Spirit Bead recognizes healthcare workers with "Olympic-sized hearts." Dill received hers after Olivia, who has earned more than 300 beads herself, nominated Dill for the special honor.

"Stephanie was the one person who helped me the most through my surgery," said Olivia. "She helps kids not to be scared, and she's just such an awesome person."

Olivia awarded the bead to Dill during a surprise party, hosted by Olivia and a few of Dill's co-workers.

"It was one of the biggest moments in my career," Dill said. "To have a child tell you what a difference you've made—it's unbelievably gratifying."

This touching moment represents thousands more stories at Children's—a steady stream of stories, in fact, linking decades past with decades to come—of patients who've been touched by the care and compassion unique to Children's.

In 2012 alone, Children's treated more than 346,000 patients. That's more than 40 times the size of our 8,200-employee careforce.

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**"It was one of the biggest moments in my career," Dill said. "To have a child tell you what a difference you've made—it's unbelievably gratifying."**

And most of those children and their families received so much more than medical care. Many of them gained a home-away-from-home and an extension of their family. They got someone like Stephanie Dill to comfort them. They received access to passionate, dedicated healthcare professionals. They experienced the Children's difference, a level of care and support that exceeds a typical hospital stay.



Offering comfort, counseling and laughs whenever possible, Stephanie Dill, Child Life Specialist, has touched the lives of many Children's patients, including Zyshun, a 13-year-old heart transplant patient, seen above choosing a few new Beads of Courage to commemorate her recent surgery.

## Today: Delivering the best care

Dill and Olivia first met at Camp Braveheart, a Children's-run overnight camp for children and teens that have had a heart transplant or are affected by heart disease. They bonded quickly, and soon, Dill would help Olivia prepare for the biggest operation of her life: open-heart surgery.

For Dill, getting Olivia ready for surgery meant sharing detailed facts and information as well as offering emotional support. "We show patients pictures of every room they'll be in, and what they'll see, hear and feel. It gives families trust in us and trust in the process," said Dill. Dill knows that helping a patient cope can significantly lower stress and pain and even reduce the need for sedation. "It's easy enough for a big hospital

with lots of patients to overlook these things, but they're vital to a patient's well-being. At Children's, we want every patient to feel safe."

For Olivia's mom, Melissa Harvey, these personal touches make all the difference. For her, Children's is the total package. "Of course, we're tremendously grateful for the clinical care. But at Children's, they didn't just push parents aside. Stephanie made the ordeal much less stressful and the bead program gave Olivia a sense of pride and motivation. The social workers, chaplains, librarians, therapists, dog therapy program, libraries, play areas, Camp Braveheart—they all come together to give kids like Olivia the best possible care."

Children's has grown to be one of the nation's preeminent pediatric hospitals, and through

the years, we've kept our eye on what's most important: what's best for our patients. And as the Harvey family points out, that all-encompassing kind of care means great things for the patients we see.

## We've kept our eye on what's most important: what's best for our patients.

## Yesterday: Lessons from the past

The Children's difference doesn't happen by accident. It's not only what we do, it's who we've been for years. Since Children's opened its doors, our spirited "above and beyond" approach has touched the lives of the children who need us, lives like Hanna Bauer Pintozzi's.

Hanna Pintozzi knows how precious life is and celebrates every moment of it with her husband and four children.



Pintozzi was born in 1978 in South America, and at the age of 10, doctors pronounced her dead of a heart attack.

"I died in an emergency room in Venezuela," said Pintozzi. "For several minutes, I had no vital signs. The doctors pulled up the sheet and broke the news to my mother. And then somehow, God brought me back."

Even though she had been revived, with multiple heart defects, Pintozzi's prognosis was grim, and her family was desperate for a solution. "My parents saw a *Reader's Digest* story about cardiology research at Emory, and they knew I had to be in Atlanta," she said. "Very quickly, we got visas and moved to Atlanta, where Emory connected us to Egleston's pediatric heart team."

Her time at Egleston wasn't always easy. Hospitalized for months at a time, Pintozzi was often scared and in pain. "My father worked and my mother couldn't always be there," Pintozzi recalled. "I could have been very lonely, but the

was normal. Their visits were the highlights of my days."

Multiple surgeries and medications failed, but her doctors wouldn't give up. And in 1992, nearly three years into Pintozzi's journey, doctors performed a procedure known as a cardiac ablation to successfully restore her heart's rhythm. The procedure works by scarring or destroying tissue in the heart that triggers an abnormal heart rhythm. "Back then, it was an experimental surgery," she explained. "Thanks to doctors like mine who pioneered it, ablation has since become routine and highly successful."

Pintozzi's time with Children's changed her life forever. Today, she lives in Atlanta with four children of her own and a career inspired by Children's. "I especially appreciated the hospital's teacher, who helped me stay on top of my education even though I was in the hospital for long stretches of time. After college, I joined my husband in the family educational publishing business producing

## Tomorrow: Transforming pediatric care

Celebrated as one of the best hospitals in the country, it would be easy for Children's to rest on our laurels, but just as we were for Pintozzi in 1992, we're still keeping our eye on the future of pediatric care and making strides wherever we can.

One of the areas we hope to see even more breakthroughs in soon is cystic fibrosis (CF). Infants born with CF in the 1980s weren't expected to live much past middle school. Now, due to advancements made through exhaustive research, the life expectancy is age 40 and beyond.

And if Nael McCarty, Ph.D., Marcus Professor of Cystic Fibrosis, Department of Pediatrics at Emory University School of Medicine and Director for Cystic Fibrosis Research at the Emory+Children's Pediatric Research Center, has anything to say about it, the future for CF patients looks even brighter. Dr. McCarty has dedicated his career to studying the pathophysiology of CF, including the structure and function of CFTR, the protein that is defective in CF. Through further research, Dr. McCarty hopes to better understand the pathophysiology of this disease and/or generate new devices and treatments to increase the length and quality of life for CF patients.

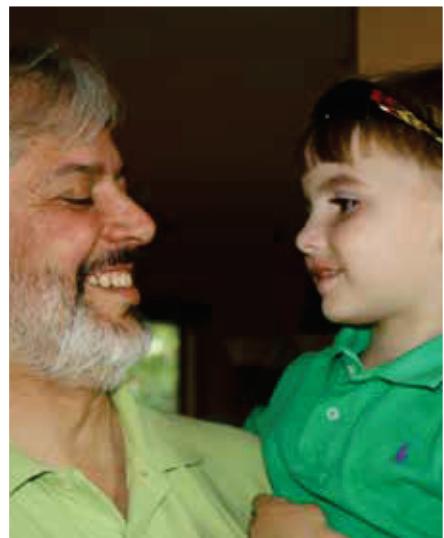
And to Children's patients with CF, like 5-year-old Blake Jones, that's great news. Jones' parents have been supporting McCarty's research for two years, and, like McCarty, they are committed to doing everything they can

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**"I could have been very lonely, but the Children's staff treated me like their own daughter. And the volunteers made a huge impression, playing with me and treating me like I was normal. Their visits were the highlights of my days."**

Children's staff treated me like their own daughter. And the volunteers made a huge impression, playing with me and treating me like I

study guides for standardized tests," she said. "Children's supported my education; now, I can help others with theirs."



► Dr. Nael McCarty and Blake Jones formed a special bond through their interaction over the past two years.

in the name of a cure for CF. And thanks to young CF patients, like Blake, who are willing to share their experiences, and partnerships with research facilities, such as Emory, that research marches forward. Not only does Blake participate in research studies and new drug therapy, his parents have also contributed to finding a cure for CF in a unique way.

When the Joneses decided to expand their family, they used IVF to select a disease-free embryo. Then, they donated the remaining embryos—all positive for CF—to a research program in California. Through the IVF process and help from the team at Emory, the Joneses have an addition to their family: a CF-free baby girl named Lila.

"We understand the critical role we can play in the development of new treatments and the search for a cure," said Justin Jones, Blake's dad. "The more people involved, the faster we'll have answers."

And Children's is dedicated to finding those answers. Children's has made a commitment to invest in research, tapping a deep reservoir of preeminent scientists, physicians and engineers at Emory, Georgia Tech and other Atlanta institutions.

"With the combination of our large patient base, the tremendous intellectual potential at our constellation of academic institutions and strong financial resources, Children's and its partners stand

to become leaders in developing new therapies and approaches that will have great impact on the lives of our patients," said Dr. McCarty.

"Much of this research is being done in partnership with our patient families, such as the Joneses. For many of those families, research is the basis of hope for a cure or control of the condition that threatens their loved ones. Knowing this adds motivation to our researchers, driving them to leave no stone unturned, no hypothesis untested."

### A story of strategic transformation

Past, present and future, our stories represent our accomplishments and strengths, even as they point us toward the future. And it's worth repeating: These stories don't happen by accident.

There is a common thread: the Children's difference, crafted carefully and nurtured over years to make sure we deliver the best care, inspire the best in our people, reach out to our community and advance scientific discoveries. Our caregivers realize how important it is to treat the entire family. That is the Children's difference. It's the reason our patients and their families return for treatment ranging from the flu to traumatic brain injuries. And the reason we know there will be more stories—and more happy endings—for our patients for years to come. ☐

# Giving Comes Full Circle

## Humble. Brilliant. Compassionate.

These are all words patients and their family members use to describe Andrew Reisner, M.D.

In his 25-year career as a pediatric neurosurgeon, he has established a large network of families who are extremely grateful to him. In fact, a few of these families recently came together and established The Andrew Reisner, M.D., Traumatic Brain Injury Fund to honor him and his work.

"We hear from families all the time that Dr. Reisner helps them get through these scary situations. He sits down with them in the cafeterias, calls them on the weekends and makes them feel that things are going to get better," said Chuck Otto, Senior Development Director with the Children's Foundation. "I am not surprised that Children's families wanted to honor him in some way. We will make sure that the funding is directed toward projects that Dr. Reisner is passionate about."

The Joneses are one of the families that contributed to the establishment of this fund. Leslie Jones, General Counsel at Children's, credits Dr. Reisner with saving her daughter's life 10 years ago. At the age of 14, her daughter, Jessica, fell off a retaining wall on Halloween night.

She was immediately transported to Children's where Dr. Reisner performed an emergency craniotomy. With the amount of brain trauma Jessica sustained, it was unclear whether or not she would fully recover. Despite the obstacles she faced, Jessica fully recovered and went on to graduate from Stanford University. And when Stanford presented her with the prestigious J.E. Wallace Sterling Award for scholastic achievement, it was Dr. Reisner that shared the stage with Jessica. He

**"It's satisfying and interesting to treat severe head injuries, but not a lot of work has been done in the field of head injuries and concussions. This fund will help us focus on this serious issue."**

*—Andrew Reisner, M.D.*

had become more than just the physician who saved her life; he was her friend and the inspiration behind her choice to study medicine at the Cleveland Clinic.

"I am extremely honored to receive this named fund," said Dr. Reisner. "It's satisfying and interesting to treat severe head injuries. This fund will help us focus on this serious issue and hopefully contribute to a better understanding and

treatment of these potentially devastating injuries."

The initial funding will focus on research that potentially improves outcomes for children with traumatic brain injuries, as well as support research and training efforts that prevent injury. Members of the Severe Traumatic Brain Injury Committee are already investigating bleeding disorders following head injuries. Along with colleagues from Hematology, Jeanne Hendrickson, M.D., and Kevin Bunting, Ph.D., and Intensive Care, Karen Walson, M.D., Atul Vats, M.D., and Toni Petrillo-Albarano, M.D., Dr. Reisner wants to research bleeding problems with children who have sustained a head injury.

"Dr. Reisner is an extraordinary physician, surgeon and human being," added Otto. "This fund is confirmation that he touches families' lives beyond his medical expertise."

Dr. Reisner continues to be soft-spoken about the recognition and explains that success requires a team. "One of the most gratifying things about treating children with head injuries is the wonderful collegiality of working with multiple groups of specialists, physicians and nurses," said Dr. Reisner. "All of these specialists bring a unique perspective on how to manage these patients, which is highly beneficial to our patients." ☐

# A Decade of Care for a Lifetime of Happiness

At 15 years old and after years of being in and out of Children's, Caroline Tracy is what we'd called "a frequent flier." But she's also a typical freshman at Walton High School, who enjoys walking her dog Rosebud and working on puzzles.

Caroline's most frightening visit to Children's came when she was just 5 years old and a helicopter transported her to the Intensive Care Unit at Egleston after a drunk driver struck her mother's car. Tragically, her mother didn't survive the crash, and Caroline was left in a medically induced coma with severe brain trauma. Shortly after the crash, Dean and Wes Harris, her aunt and uncle, became Caroline's legal guardians, and the two saw her through her rehab and recovery.

Her recovery was anything but easy. After months of physical and mental rehabilitation, though, Caroline started adjusting to life after the accident. She had some minor memory and learning issues due to the crash, but according to her aunt, she is a remarkable girl. "She's resilient," said Dean. "I admire that about her."

Caroline's positive attitude would come in handy again when, at the age of 7, she began wearing a Boston Brace for severe scoliosis, to help keep the spine from curving. The plastic brace was worn between 16 to 22 hours a day, and after three years Caroline was in so much discomfort that Dean began exploring other options. It was then that Children's recommended Caroline undergo a posterior spinal fusion surgery with instrumentation to correct the curve of her back. The procedure fused her spine

it not been for the treatment that she received. "Children's has been there every step of the way. We really believe Children's gave Caroline her life back."

Following her spinal surgery, Caroline realized that by sharing her own story she could help other children who may be going through the same thing she did.

"I know what it's like to go through procedures and rehabilitation and think 'there's no way I can do this,' but it's all about focusing on your goals," said Caroline.

**"Children's has been there every step of the way. We really believe Children's gave Caroline her life back."**

and implanted rods and screws to help correct the irregularity.

Following the surgery, Caroline had to endure a painful recovery, but she is now "a normal teenager in every way," according to Dean. Caroline's life could have been completely different had

"I hope that I can share my story with as many people as possible so they see what can happen if they keep working and really commit to their journey."

And with an attitude like Caroline's, the journey only gets better. ☺



► Caroline Tracy, with the help of Children's and her extended family, including her grandparents, is now a typical 15-year-old freshman at Walton High School.

# Stress.....less

It's been one of those days: The car won't start, you're locked out of your house, you're late for work and nothing is going right. You start to feel your face get hot and your fists ball up, and you're ready to scream. It's safe to say you're experiencing stress. While counting to 10 or punching a pillow are certainly methods to explore, there is a fine line between healthy and unhealthy ways to address stress. If not dealt with, stress can lead to headaches, high blood pressure, heart problems, diabetes, skin conditions, asthma, arthritis, depression and anxiety.

Sometimes—despite our best efforts to manage stress—life brings on more than we can handle on our own. Luckily, Strong4Life is dedicated to offering resources that help employees care for their health, providing programs to encourage healthy habits,

like exercise, nutrition and stress relief. And recently, Strong4Life launched a new program to tackle stress management. The Children's Stress Management Seminar series is available to all employees, and the program covers a variety of subject areas affecting employees with the goal of providing tips and tools to managing different aspects of stress. Participants can expect to learn about everything from finances to time management in four, one-hour sessions.

It can be all too easy to fall into a pattern of around-the-clock stress. Devoting time to dealing with stress

and developing coping mechanisms is imperative for those that find themselves consumed by worry or anxiety. Strong4Life wants Children's employees to feel confident that there are ways to reduce stress and maintain a healthy, balanced lifestyle. ☐

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**Sometimes—despite our best efforts to manage stress—life brings on more than we can handle on our own.**

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The Children's Stress Management Seminar series focuses on stressors facing employees. The series helps participants develop healthy coping mechanisms for life's little surprises.

MAY



### Four Cornerstones of Your Financial Future

This session explores strategies that can help Children's employees feel more confident about reaching financial goals. Tips on how aligning four key concepts—cash management, protecting your financial future, investing and tax planning—can help goals become more attainable. Participants will learn ways to identify and correct critical gaps in your current financial plan.

JULY



### Building Resiliency

Don't let the unexpected changes in life throw off your rhythm. Learn how adapting to change, and not merely surviving, is possible. This interactive training teaches the audience the phases of change that occur when confronted with something new. It also teaches change management techniques that help participants bounce back and master change in a positive way.

SEPTEMBER



### Time out for Time Management

This learn-at-lunch session offers general suggestions for employees about ways to better manage their time. It focuses on how to reduce work distractions and how to identify and decrease "time wasters" in day-to-day activities. Participants also gain awareness of what demands are made on their time at work and in their personal life and which ones they can and cannot control.

NOVEMBER



### Strategies for Managing Holiday Stress

No matter what you're celebrating, the holiday season can be stressful. The goal of this seminar is to teach participants how to better anticipate and manage the inevitable stress associated with the holidays. Participants learn how to avoid the typical holiday stress traps and how to plan for a more satisfying and meaningful holiday season.

For additional information about the Children's Stress Seminar, visit Careforce Connection.

## I ❤ Getting Social

Children's wouldn't be Children's without our patients and their remarkable stories. Sharing those stories is important work, and there are so many ways to make sure they're heard. Employees, former and current patients and the community can be inspired by our work on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter. And it's not just for the social media gurus; anyone can share these stories. So, connect with Children's, and share the inspirational stories that fill the pages.

Engage with patients, employees and even Hope and Will. These are just a few of the smiling faces seen on our social media pages.



## Get Connected —



For the Facebook lovers:  
[http://www.facebook.com/  
ChildrensHealthcareofAtlanta](http://www.facebook.com/ChildrensHealthcareofAtlanta)



For the visually inclined:  
<http://instagram.com/childrensatl>



For the under 140 characters set:  
[@Childrensatl](#)



For the future movie directors:  
[http://www.youtube.com/  
user/childrenshospitals](http://www.youtube.com/user/childrenshospitals)

## Question:

# Where do the Children's Therapy Dogs Come From?

In the Children's library, as Alex's post-op pain recedes, he reads to Saucy, a golden retriever who seems riveted by the story. Meanwhile, Casper, another golden, skillfully navigates dialysis equipment to snuggle with Natalie, who pronounces she's "lots better" with Casper there. At Camp Krazy Legs, camper Kendrick gives Button a long hug, drawing courage from the dog before canoeing for the first time. And in the Center for Safe and Healthy Children, Bella's gentle doggy charm immediately puts a distraught Michaela at ease, allowing clinicians to provide care.

Witness a service dog in action and it's clear: They're superheroes. Their loving presence reduces anxiety and pain, while facilitating physical and psychological therapies. But these dogs are much more than friendly faces. They're highly trained assistants, able to follow more than 90 commands, everything from opening doors to flipping light switches to retrieving items, even responding to medical emergencies.

But where do these wonder dogs come from?

Children's service dogs come from Canine Assistants, a nonprofit organization that breeds, trains and places service dogs. Most are golden retrievers or Labradors, known for their intelligence, loyalty and eagerness to please.

At Canine Assistants' farm in Milton, training starts just two days after birth. "They begin with sensory experiences, like touching the puppies' paws with feathers, exposing them to unfamiliar noises and equipment, and offering lots of human socialization," said Lisa Kinsel, Manager, Volunteer Services, Scottish Rite. "This helps the pups bond with humans and teaches them to be composed at all times."

By the time they are six weeks old, puppies begin navigating obstacle courses and learning their commands. Soon, they're placed in foster homes, visiting the farm for regular training. They also do a rotation at Children's, working across all patient populations and as a part of the "Reading to Rover" program.

At 18 months, most dogs are ready for service. Qualified applicants visit the farm, where Canine Assistants encourages dogs and humans to choose each other. Then, the new pair undergoes some additional training to help the dogs and new handlers learn to work together.

Lifelong care for service dogs is well over \$20,000, so Canine Assistants offers sponsorships to cover the costs. But the value of these canine caregivers is priceless, to both recipients and the humans who care for them. "Service dogs have become an important part of our culture. They have jobs and accountabilities. They break down huge barriers between a hospital and a child," said Joyce Ramsey-Coleman, Chief Nursing Executive, who also appreciates the Children's employees who volunteer to be service dog handlers. "The results of this program have been tremendous. These dogs are some of the kindest spirits that walk our halls. They know when people need them, and they love their work."

Next question? 



# A Leg of Their Own

## Sharpie and Children's team up for one-of-a-kind prosthetic

Erik Bounasis is a high school athlete. He's a dedicated teammate on high school football and baseball teams. But Erik's training hasn't always been like other athletes, because he has fibular hemimelia, or the shortening or absence of a fibula at birth. This condition usually requires amputation of portions of the leg or legs to prepare them for prosthetics down the road. Sixteen-year-old Erik has effectively been using prosthetics since he was a toddler, but as his high school athletic career demonstrates, that has never slowed him down.

On average, a child with a prosthetic limb has to replace the prosthesis yearly for the fit to keep up with their growth. For Erik, this nearly annual visit came this past March, but this time, things were a little different. Erik had some say on the design of his limb, thanks to some ingenuity at Children's and the skills of some talented designers.

The Orthotics & Prosthetics and Marketing departments took an interest in the team's growing ability to customize prosthetic limbs. More and more, patients were submitting designs for their limbs, and the team wanted to reach out to designers to produce more custom creations. They needed a brand that championed creativity, and the answer was simple: Sharpie. The manufacturer of writing products had the perfect team for just such a project.

"This is taking something that could make you feel different and celebrating it instead of hiding it," says Caitlin Peterson, Associate Manager, Public Relations and Consumer Engagement at Newell Rubbermaid Writing and Creative Expressions—the makers of Sharpie products.

When Peterson was 6, she saw Children's work firsthand after a skating accident. "Children's does such great work. Hopefully that is able to translate to the

designs the team came up with," she said.

For the designs, Peterson turned to a squad of influential Sharpie users put together in 2009. The group is made up of 11 artists—with vocations ranging from songwriter to skateboard art designer—who use Sharpie products regularly in their work. They have been featured in Sharpie ad campaigns and other collaborations. This time, they were given information about Erik and asked to come up with designs for his prosthetic leg.

"It's the ultimate temporary tattoo," said Katie Tidwell, Marketing Coordinator. "It's going to be around for a pretty long time. So, why not make it something you like?" She and her team plan to keep finding new ways for children to have a say in their ultimate temporary tattoo.

The team came up with three designs that were sent to Erik, each with a different approach. The first is a simple alternation

of baseballs, footballs and football helmets; the second is made up of dense black and white stencil work, depicting a pattern surrounding two symmetrical dragons; and the third is a colorful, psychedelic pattern with a baseball, football and baseball bat as the main focus. Ultimately, he ended up working with the Sharpie team to combine two of the designs into one.

"It turned out to be exactly what I wanted. I had the idea to incorporate my school's colors into the football helmet and had a few other suggestions," said Erik. "The team was really awesome to work with."

What happened next? Children's and Sharpie worked together to scan and transfer Erik's final design to fabric. Finally, the Orthotics department laminated the fabric onto Erik's prosthetic using a liquid acrylic. Erik received his new high-performance, customized limb just in time for spring football. ☐

# Eight Years and Counting

## You Make Children's a "Best Company to Work For"—but How?

In January, Children's celebrated our eighth appearance on *Fortune* magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" list. We've also been included in *Atlanta-Journal Constitution* as one of metro Atlanta's top 100 workplaces, *Working Mother* magazine as a top company for working mothers, *Parents* magazine as one of the top 10 children's hospitals in the country and *U.S. News & World Report* as one of America's best pediatric hospitals. So how did we secure a spot among the "best"? Or better yet, why does it matter?

Every honor begins with an application. Our applications include various segments that explain who we are and what we do. A significant portion of each application includes a comprehensive survey, hosted by the publications, for employees. The answers to these surveys weigh heavily on the list-makers' ranking criteria. The publications' selection committees take employees' answers very seriously, reviewing input closely to inform their choices and compare us with others being considered. We know that our employees have been surveyed for so many years that it might be tempting to speed through the questions without giving much thought to the responses. But thoughtful feedback is largely responsible for our final ranking. Additionally,

one of the most important functions of employee surveys is to gather feedback so Children's can gauge how employees feel about everything from benefits to facilities to recognition.

By taking the time to give honest, thoughtful responses, you give Children's reasons to celebrate

existing staff and patients benefit. When we have a more competitive pool of applicants, we can build a stronger team of employees.

These types of accolades also give the community a sense of our high standards. Families recognize that satisfied employees perform better, are more productive

When national rankings, like *Fortune's*, endorse Children's, it's more than just a pat on the back. Our status as a top employer helps us find and keep our extraordinary talent.

our accomplishments and offer guidance on where we can improve. Our employees are the lifeblood of Children's, so finding the very best talent—and giving you reasons to stay—is nothing less than vital.

When national rankings, like *Fortune's*, endorse Children's, it's more than just a pat on the back. Our status as a top employer helps us find and keep our extraordinary talent. When Children's first appeared on the *Fortune* list in 2006, job applicants doubled to 50,000. Today, that number is nearly 80,000 applicants. And applicants consistently confirm that the ratings influence their decision to apply. Of course, with an ample supply of talent, both

and provide better patient care. Inclusion on these lists also speaks to potential donors, helping us raise funds and, in turn, strengthen our financial future.

It's easy to become complacent with our rankings and recognition, especially after the eighth year of being one of the best companies to work for in the nation. But these rankings are hardly something to take for granted. These surveys and rankings help to guide us in the right direction as an organization, pointing us toward programs and benefits that make us a competitive employer on a national level. And that's good for everyone, because, for Children's, "best" helps us get better all the time. **c**

# For Patrick

By Erin Chance, Patrick's mother and cancer research advocate

It's hard to describe how you feel when your child is diagnosed with cancer. It's the worst possible news for a parent. Doctors diagnosed our son Patrick, at the age of 3, with neuroblastoma. He had a tumor of the sympathetic nervous system, and it changed the way my husband, Stephen, and I saw the world. We knew that we would do everything we could to help Patrick beat this disease. And we never gave up hope that Patrick could be the one to beat stage IV neuroblastoma.

Patrick was such a strong patient, taking harsh treatments with a smile and a positive attitude. He would much rather have been fishing or bird watching, and we tried to keep his life as normal as possible despite his battle with cancer. While he was fighting, we vowed as a family to raise money to fund new treatments for neuroblastoma and formed Press On to CURE Childhood Cancer, a named fund of CURE Childhood Cancer, Inc., to fund less toxic, more effective cancer therapies.

On what would have been his 9th birthday, Patrick passed away on Jan. 9, 2012, but we knew that wasn't the end of his story. When we learned that Children's had decided to start a specialized radiation therapy program, it was the perfect opportunity to honor Patrick's legacy in a special way. On January 9, 2013, we helped dedicate Children's new MIBG (metaiodobenzylguanidine) therapy room in Patrick's name. What's special about MIBG treatment is that it allows the patient to be injected with a radioactive drug that targets the cancer cells directly, causing less damage to other parts of the body.

Because of our personal experience during Patrick's four MIBG treatments, my husband and I wanted to help design the space. We envisioned two rooms: one for the patient and one for the family. When Patrick received MIBG treatment, he was radioactive for several days, and we had to limit our interaction with him to protect our own bodies from radiation exposure. It was extremely tough not to be able to hold or touch your child and to be separated visually from him by solid lead



 Patrick Chance was diagnosed with nueroblastoma at the age of 3, but that didn't stop him from being full of life.

shields. We recommended installing televisions in each room along with three-way video and microphones, so that patients and parents could see and talk with each other on the monitors and even play video games together. The nurses can also use the monitors to watch over the child. It was important to us to provide better nursing care for the patient while protecting the nurses from continuous radiation exposure.

Although it was emotionally difficult to go back to Children's for the grand opening on the anniversary of his death, it was the perfect way to celebrate his memory. In many cultures, if you die on your birthday, it's a sign you perfectly completed your mission on earth. For me, dedicating this room a year after Patrick died was another completion of that circle. It was part of fulfilling what I believe was his mission on earth: touching people's lives and changing the course of childhood cancer treatment.

Until childhood cancer is cured, we plan to continue our mission and fundraise on behalf of cancer research and treatment. We know that Patrick is still fighting beside us, continuing his own desire to heal people. I can't think of a better way to honor his life. ☚

Grab your cape! The inaugural Strong4Life<sup>SM</sup> Super Hero Sprint will take place Saturday, June 8.



Suit up in your best super hero costume for the 5K & one-mile fun run. For more information visit [Careforce Connection](#).

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