

MAY & JUNE 2013

# Careforce

## CHRONICLE



## Welcome Home to Children's

..... *Also in this Issue*

Honoring Big Hearts

Benefits at Every Turn





## 6 Welcome Home to Children's

Children's is invested in you—your career and your work-life success are important. Employees like Beth Eggleston, pictured here with her family, take advantage of programs and benefits that match her family's needs. But it's not just families that Children's caters to. New moms, working dads, young professionals; you name it, Children's has you covered.

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Photo: The Egglestons now spend time together in new and healthy ways, like cooking healthy meals or going for walks. Even yoga creeps into their daily lives.

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## Our Promise to You



When we care for kids, we pull out all the stops. We're known for it, in fact. From hosting proms in conference rooms to continuing to explore the best possible treatment options for our patients, we take care of children by understanding that each one has complex medical needs and a unique spirit. And our dedicated, above-and-beyond approach is what makes the Children's difference possible.

But we all know that the Children's difference is only as good as our employees. You're what makes Children's such a special place to work. No matter where you work in our System, you are specially trained and inherently compassionate. You are resilient and kindhearted.

Children's is lucky to have you and so are our patients.

So, we want to give you an employee experience that is special, an experience in the spirit of the care you give our patients. We want Children's to be the place you choose over any other—a place you would recommend to your friends. We know you're passionate about caring for kids, but we want to do everything we can to make Children's a place where your professional and personal needs are met.

And we keep that thought top of mind as we make decisions, both big and small.

That's our promise to you. We will do our best to offer relevant resources, programs and benefits to make it easier for you to care for kids.

All we ask in return is that you keep doing what you do best—looking after kids with your special skills and your big hearts.

**Simply Put: You're just right for the kids we see. For that, we could never thank you enough, but we'll continue to do everything we can to make Children's feel like an extraordinary place for you and our patients.**





Gov. Nathan Deal and Jonathan Goldman, Chair, Board of Trustees, enjoyed Hope and Will's company after the governor signed HB 284 into effect.

### Governor Signs Concussion Bill at Scottish Rite

Tuesday, April 23, Gov. Nathan Deal signed into law House Bill (HB) 284, the "Return to Play Act of 2013" at Scottish Rite. HB 284, sponsored by Rep. Jimmy Pruet (R-Eastman), is aimed at developing return-to-play policies for youth athletes who are concussed during a game, educating parents on the risks of concussions and preventing Second Impact Syndrome (SIS).

Each year in Georgia, thousands of children suffer concussions. The Children's Concussion Program, led

by neurosurgeon Andrew Reisner, M.D., saw more than 1,400 concussion patients in 2012 alone. As Georgia's leading resource for sports-related youth concussion diagnosis, care and education, Children's actively lobbied and participated in support of the concussion bill. The new legislation will play a critical role in preventing SIS and protecting youth athletes throughout Georgia from the dangers associated with multiple head injuries.

### AJC Names Children's a "Top Place to Work" in Atlanta

From the 495 companies nominated in the city, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* set out to determine what made each company unique and special. By January, the field was narrowed down to 166 eligible finalists, including Children's. The publication then ranked companies based solely on responses from an employee survey distributed last December. The survey included questions about a variety of things at Children's, regarding where the organization is headed, the overall work environment, development opportunities and benefits.

Children's has been recognized several times already in 2013 as a "best place to work." Capturing the No. 46 spot on *Fortune* Magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" list and the No. 5 spot on *The Atlanta Business Chronicle's* "Healthiest Atlanta Employers" list.

Children's is proud to call itself an AJC "Top Atlanta Workplace" for the third year in a row, thanks to the dedication of our more than 8,200-person careforce.



## 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.

### Dedicated to Better

To: Barbara Strickland, Manager, Family Support Services, Hughes Spalding

I know that I've said it many times already, but clearly your kind and thoughtful gestures impact me. You already show us and tell us often how much you appreciate "all that we do," but when you came to my office and stood beside me like a mother hen, I felt nurtured. **Thank you for being the kind of leader who knows just the right time to give what is needed.**

From: Debra Sabree, Social Worker, Family Support Services, Hughes Spalding

### Care about People

To: Ruthana Swain, Unit Secretary, NICU, Egleston

**Thanks for the positive spirit you bring to work** and share with everyone. It is uplifting to work with you!

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

### Passionate about Kids

To: Celena McLaurin, Staff Nurse, Emergency department, Egleston

Thank you so much for your amazing trauma charting! **Your hard work truly shows and is appreciated!**

From: Alicia Small, Assistant Nurse Manager, Emergency department, Egleston

### Dedicated to Better

To: Sara Morgan, Staff Nurse, TICU, Scottish Rite

I just wanted to say **thank you for always going above and beyond** to help your TICU respiratory therapists. You are appreciated!

From: Giana Davis, Respiratory Care Professional, Respiratory ICU, Scottish Rite

### Dedicated to Better

To: Drew Fulton, Behavioral Parenting Counselor, Community Autism Program, Marcus Autism Center

I wanted to celebrate you for always going the extra mile for our Community Autism Program families. I received a letter from a parent stating that **"the service you provided meant a ton to them, you always encouraged them to do their best,** made sure the visits were fun, and went to great lengths to get to their home despite some of the roadblocks you encountered along the way." So, a huge THANK YOU for all of your hard work and dedication!

From: Chris Furlow, Behavioral Clinical Practitioner, Community Autism Program, Marcus Autism Center



## Meet Jamie Tinker

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For 14 years, Jamie Tinker was a software developer. But after his nephew was born prematurely and spent months in a Tennessee NICU, Jamie was inspired to abandon the software industry and go to nursing school. Jamie graduated from Emory with his nursing

degree and has been at Children's ever since. Lately, Jamie has been working the night shift in the NICU at Egleston. There might not be scheduled surgeries or other procedures at this hour, but the hospital is by no means a quiet place late at night.

# A Day in the Life ...of a NICU Nurse

**6:30 p.m.** – While most people are just getting home from work, Jamie leaves his house and heads in to work.

**6:45 p.m.** – Jamie usually cares for one or two patients per shift. Tonight, he has the same two patients as last night. Abdul is a 6-week-old baby with pulmonary hypertension, an increase of blood pressure in the pulmonary artery. Jamie's other patient is 4-month-old Bryce, who is post-surgery and receives his nutrition through a gastrostomy tube inserted in his abdomen.

**7:00 p.m.** – After checking both patients' charts, Jamie joins the start of shift huddle. Because everyone in the NICU has specific duties for the night, the huddle is when nurses can share patient stories and learn from each other.

**7:30 p.m.** – Bryce is up first. Jamie completes a thorough head-to-toe assessment, including a vitals check. Vitals need to be taken every two hours and head-to-toe assessments every four hours.

**8:00 p.m.** – Jamie is finished charting Bryce's vitals and visits Abdul for his first assessment. Until recently, Abdul wasn't breathing on his own, so Jamie asks a respiratory therapist to assist in his evaluation.

**10:45 p.m.** – Bryce seems uncomfortable; he's crying more than usual tonight. Jamie takes Bryce's vitals before spending some extra time coaxing him back to sleep. "Every kid is different and every day is different. Some kids need more hands-on attention and human contact and some don't. Knowing your patient is so important to giving them the right care," says Jamie.

**2:00 a.m.** – It's time for a short break; Jamie typically eats something light in order to keep his energy up. Tonight, he's brought oatmeal and yogurt to give him the boost he needs.

**2:25 a.m.** – Jamie lets one of his co-workers know that he's back from his break and goes to check on his patients. It's almost time for another dose of medication. "It's so important to stay on top of everything. Vitals can change at a moment's notice. You have to be ready for anything," says Jamie.

**4:00 a.m.** – Tonight, Jamie will draw blood from both Abdul and Bryce for some basic tests. This is one of the more delicate tasks of the evening. Because of their small size and the fact that they are fragile from health complications, Jamie must use a heel stick instead of taking blood from their arms. Jamie carefully draws the blood and sends the samples off to the lab.

**5:45 a.m.** – It is time for the last vitals checks of the shift. He teams up with a respiratory therapist one last time to check on Abdul and then completes his final check on Bryce.



Jamie comforts one of his patients as he wakes from a procedure.

**6:40 a.m.** – Jamie stays to complete paperwork and enter his patient's information into the EPIC system before he's finished.

**7:50 a.m.** – Finally home, Jamie showers and catches up on some sleep.

**3:00 p.m.** – After running some errands, Jamie manages to squeeze in a workout. He heads to the hospital around 6:30 p.m. to get his assignments and start his shift all over again. "Every night is a balancing act, but unlike my days as a software developer, now I love what I do. I can't imagine being anywhere else or doing any other job," says Jamie. 📌

# Welcome Home to Children's

*Children's is passionate about providing the resources that employees need, and one-size doesn't fit all around here. Luckily, there's something for everyone. From families to young professionals, this is a place you can feel good calling home.*

Beth Eggleston is constantly in motion, but for her, sometimes staying in motion means sitting still. As a clinical educator for the Sports Medicine and Urgent Care Centers, Eggleston spends about 14 hours a week in her car, traveling to sites from Scottish Rite to neighborhood locations. But she is more than a professional, she is a mother, a wife, a sports enthusiast, family chauffeur, and she is busy.

Eggleston is one of our more than 8,200-person careforce who call Children's their professional home. But for her, Children's is much more than just a job. Children's is Eggleston's partner in creating what's known as "work-life success," or the idea that one's work and home lives are as in sync as possible.

### Finding a better balance

With four kids—ranging from 4 to 20 in age—controlled chaos is the name of the game in the Eggleston household. Eggleston's husband is a basketball coach who works odd hours, so she often wrangles the kids solo. "Basketball season is definitely challenging at our house," she laughed. "It's easy to say you'll plan ahead, but it's hard to avoid the fast food drive-through, whether I'm on the road, at work or with the kids. And corralling the whole family for quality time is nearly impossible." Eggleston found that the lack of quality family time and the frequent fast food runs left them unhealthy and unhappy.

So, when Eggleston learned about the new Children's Family Wellness Program, she was eager to give it a try. "The Children's Family Wellness Program begins with an eight-week program that gives employees the opportunity to work with a trained wellness

coach and set goals for their family," explained Beth Strickland, Vice President, Total Rewards.

Eggleston's wellness coach assessed her family's challenges and came up with positive changes they could make together. He recommended some family-friendly exercise options, like yoga and walking. While the idea of yoga with her kids sounded strange at first, it was a big hit. "My son actually asked if he could sign up for more," Eggleston said. "I was shocked. I love that we're working and playing together more as a family, and that we've also found new things to learn together."

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**"I've gotten better at thinking ahead and stocking our home with healthy snacks."**

The Egglestons also received an informative workbook filled with games, recipes and ideas, a weekly newsletter, and membership to an online group that allows families to share ideas, obstacles and goals. "I've gotten better at thinking ahead and stocking our home and car with healthy snacks," she said. "And we're sitting down to dinner as a family more. I let the kids set the table and light the candles. It's a little thing, but they love it."

Eggleston has tapped into a number of programs geared toward families, from fitness classes and





Yoga was an unexpected success for the Eggleston family. It became an activity the whole family can do together, and they all enjoy it.



■ Eggleston is a busy busy mom of four kids, but now, her whole family is able to get fit together thanks to the Children's Family Wellness Program.

nutrition counseling, to the Children's Concierge Program, At Your Service. "Most of us know these resources exist, but we don't always use them," she said. "Since getting involved with the Family Wellness Program in particular, I've realized that if I take even one small step forward, I'll be met by a wonderful support team. And that inspires me to do more. Programs like these truly make Children's great."

### Generating a healthy ripple effect

Pop-Tarts and bacon. That's what inspired Gerald Drummond, Patient Account Supervisor, to join the Family Wellness Program. "My son isn't overweight, but he's a picky eater, sticking to those two foods whenever he can. I wanted to help him eat better and improve our family time," Drummond explained. Drummond enlisted the help of a wellness coach to set measureable goals and explore ways for the entire family to be involved in achieving them.

"Now, we take our son along to the grocery store to choose healthy foods for our whole family," said Drummond. "And we've added a family skate night to our weekly routine. The changes were fairly

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**"Since getting involved with the Family Wellness Program in particular, I've realized that if I take even one small step forward, I'll be met by a wonderful support team. And that inspires me to do more. Programs like these truly make Children's great."**

small, but the rewards have been great." Rewards like increased energy, more quality time and the motivation to keep the routine going. Drummond was so energized by his new family routine that he decided to do more with his personal health and wellness.

He made healthy changes by participating in Mission: Slimpossible, losing enough weight to reduce his blood pressure medication. And now, he serves as a



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## “Our goal, of course, is to support every employee in everything they do.”

Children’s Wellness Ambassador, sharing his healthy enthusiasm with co-workers.

“Children’s backs up what they say about work-life success,” he said. “And as my pastor reminds me, the actions you take in your life impact others. I’m hoping that my actions related to wellness and work-life success will positively impact others.”

### Something for everyone

For the Egglestons and the Drummonds, managing healthy habits was the order of the day. But, the menu of Children’s benefits and programs is as long as it is varied. Children’s remains committed to offering benefits through your Total Rewards, the comprehensive benefits package offered here at Children’s. Total Rewards encompasses a wealth of fitness, financial and health offerings.

Total Rewards also includes things for working moms and dads at Children’s. In addition to a week of paid leave and 12 weeks job-guaranteed maternity leave, parents can choose from three accredited, near-site child care centers, subsidized back-up care options, plus free access to more than 3,000 local sitters. An online working mom’s network (look for “Working Mothers” on Careforce Connection), bi-monthly Great Expectations baby showers, expectant parents education programs, even adoption and infertility assistance are just some of the things offered to support

working families. But Children’s knows it’s not just working moms and dads who need assistance.

“Our goal, of course, is to support every employee in everything they do. And we know they can’t fully focus on work if they’re worried about what’s going on at home,” said Linda Matzigkeit, Chief Administrative Officer. “It’s our core belief that employees need to feel supported in every aspect of their lives. We offer relevant benefits and support, so they

can grow, both personally and professionally.”

For example, employees who need emotional, financial or health support, the Employee Assistance Program offers not only counseling, but help finding the right tutor for your child or the best nursing home for your parents. If you’re looking for a time-saver, our concierge will plan vacations, make dinner reservations, run errands, find and wrap gifts, even save money on entertainment and sporting tickets.

### Survey says: Employees appreciate being heard

Children’s develops all of our programs and initiatives to serve

▶ Drummond and his family spend some quality time together while cooking healthy meals.





your needs, and that's by design. The ideas behind our new programs and benefits come straight from the source: you. Surveys, focus groups and input from wellness staff and ambassadors help Children's keep a finger on the work-life pulse and generate great ideas for new programs. Case in point: You wanted a secure financial future; healthier food in the cafeteria; on-call counselors and legal advisors. And we answered with the Children's Fidelity representative (his name is Jason Bleeker, nice guy), new and updated recipes in the cafeteria, and helpful advice from EAP. Done, done and done.

And new in 2013: a Fit and Lean Program, stress reduction education sessions, a Strong4Life Superhero 5K, even an at-home version of Mission:

Slimpossible. "We like to keep employees' options fresh, so there's something for everyone," said Matzigkeit. "Our Total Rewards programs are bringing people out and bringing them together—at work and at home. Employees say they're feeling supported as a whole person, not just a worker. That's so important to Children's."

From working parents to young professionals, there's something for everyone. But no matter how many programs Children's offers, work-life success ultimately rests on our employees' positive attitudes and the culture we have created for our patients and for each other. Thanks to your energy, engagement, encouragement and enthusiasm, Children's really is a wonderful place to call "home." 🏡

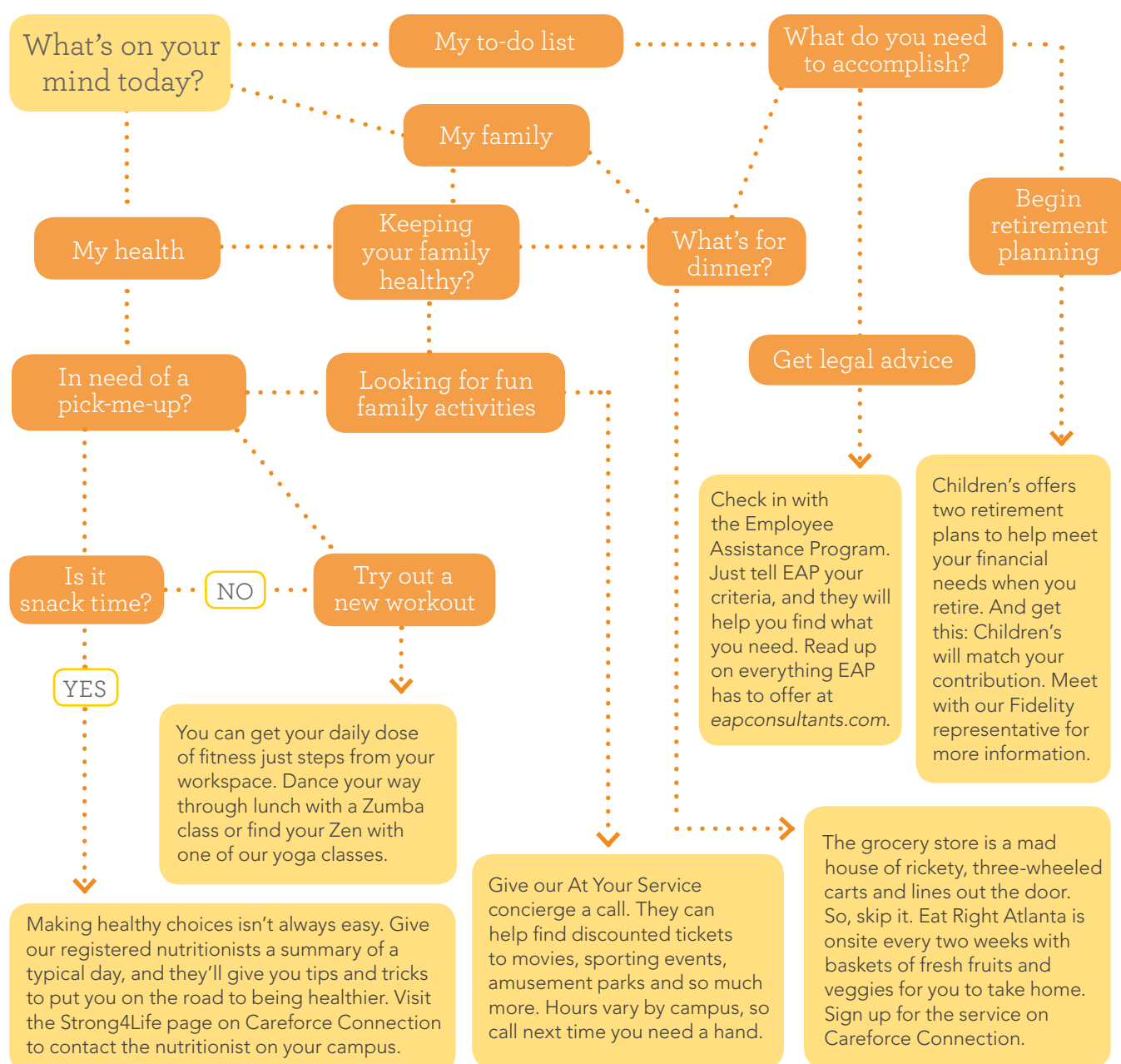
# It's the little things.

Children's offers 10 different kinds of blood pressure cuffs that fit newborns all the way up to teenagers. The smallest measures a mere 3.4 cm. That's smaller than the average stick of gum. Add that to the list of things that makes Children's uniquely qualified to care for kids of all sizes.



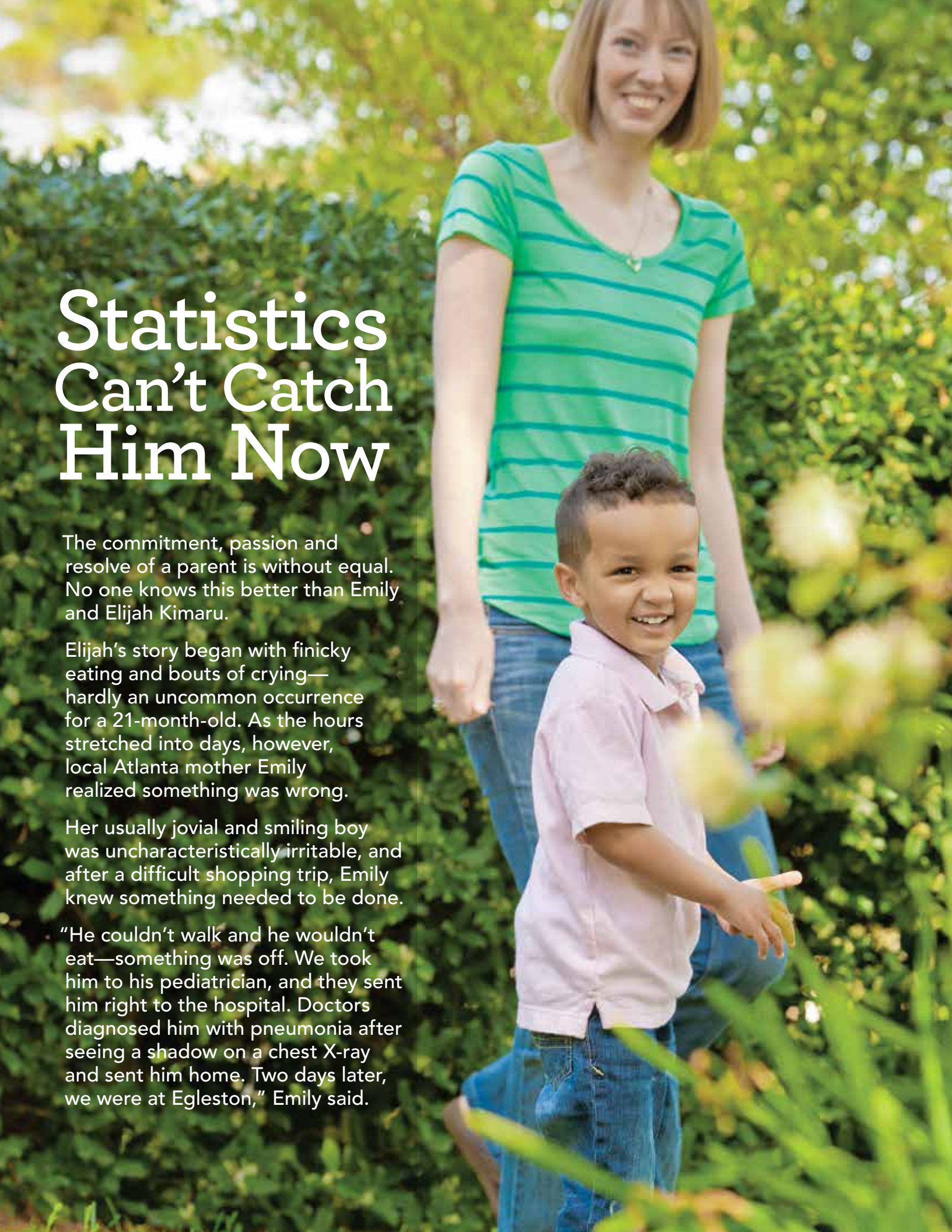
# Benefits<sup>at</sup> EVERY Turn

We've all said it, "If there were more hours in the day, I would finally have enough time for [insert your activity here]." Everyone wants to find more time in the day, and while Children's can't give you that 25th hour, we can help you find time at work for fun, support and wellness. Use this handy flow chart, and let us help you through your day.



For more information about your Total Rewards, visit [Careforce Connection](#) or contact your campus HR representative. 



A photograph of a woman and a young boy walking through a lush green garden. The woman, with short blonde hair, is wearing a green and white striped t-shirt and blue jeans. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The boy, with dark curly hair, is wearing a light pink polo shirt and blue jeans. He is also smiling and looking towards the camera, holding a small yellow object in his hand. The background is filled with green foliage and flowers, creating a bright and cheerful atmosphere.

# Statistics Can't Catch Him Now

The commitment, passion and resolve of a parent is without equal. No one knows this better than Emily and Elijah Kimaru.

Elijah's story began with finicky eating and bouts of crying—hardly an uncommon occurrence for a 21-month-old. As the hours stretched into days, however, local Atlanta mother Emily realized something was wrong.

Her usually jovial and smiling boy was uncharacteristically irritable, and after a difficult shopping trip, Emily knew something needed to be done.

"He couldn't walk and he wouldn't eat—something was off. We took him to his pediatrician, and they sent him right to the hospital. Doctors diagnosed him with pneumonia after seeing a shadow on a chest X-ray and sent him home. Two days later, we were at Eggleston," Emily said.



The dizzying progression of events eventually revealed a troubling diagnosis: Elijah had stage IV Neuroblastoma. Neuroblastoma is one of the more common forms of extracranial solid cancer, which affects approximately 650 children each year in the United States. This type of cancer makes up approximately 10 percent of all childhood cancer cases and is fatal in more than 15 percent of patients. At the time of diagnosis, Egleston physicians discovered Elijah had a large tumor off his right adrenal gland, a spot in both of his legs and arm and 10 percent of his bone marrow.

"They did an ultrasound, looking for appendicitis, as originally diagnosed by our pediatrician, and discovered a tumor that wrapped around his kidney, aorta and filled his abdomen," Emily said.

Emily turned to her family for support as she and Elijah's doctors discussed a treatment plan. It was the beginning of a long journey, one that would include 175 days in the hospital and a total of 16 months of treatment.

As the days progressed, the entire Kimaru family found assurance and support from the dedicated staff at Children's as Elijah fought for his life.

According to Kimaru, Elijah's favorite nurse Jackie Wooten displayed that dedication during a frightening nose bleed.

"The nurses were changing his central line dressing, which had to be done weekly. When they were finished and we removed Elijah's mask, we found out he had a serious nose bleed that lasted for more than an hour."

Any bleeding in a patient with Elijah's diagnosis can be serious due to a low platelet count. But Jackie didn't miss a beat. She climbed in his bed to help keep pressure on his nose and stayed with Elijah until the bleeding stopped.

In total, Elijah has had six rounds of chemotherapy, a four-and-a-half hour surgery to remove the tumor in his abdomen along his right kidney. Two stem cell transplants, 12 rounds of radiation, five rounds of antibody therapy with six months of Accutane followed.

But Elijah's story has a happy ending. Today, the playful and full-of-life Elijah, now 3, has been clear of cancer for more than two months. He will continue to receive scans to check his progress every three months, but doctors are optimistic that Elijah is out of the woods.



Emily and Elijah Kimaru spend time in the Egleston garden during a recent check-up.

Despite the ordeal, Emily keeps the situation in perspective.

"To see him smile again has been the greatest reward," Emily said. "If it weren't for the amazing care we received at Children's, I don't know if Elijah would be here today. I'm so grateful to have my son and to have Children's as part of our family."

Thanks to Children's, Emily and Elijah have a lot to look forward to. Who knows where they will be in 20 years. But one thing is for certain: Elijah now has his whole life ahead of him. 🍀

# ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Working parents at Children's care for kids from sun-up to sun-down.



▶ Margaret Harrison loves Children's so much that she inspired her own children to follow in her footsteps and become Children's employees.

With Mother's Day in May and Father's Day in June, the summertime is perfect for honoring parents. And Children's wants to honor working parents with programs like our Working Mother and Working Father of the year awards.

To our patients and families, Children's employees are miracle workers, but many of them are only halfway through their duties as caregivers when they end a shift at Children's. Working parents make up nearly 64 percent of the Children's careforce. And our hats are off to working parents, like Margaret Harrison and Glenn Pacifico, who find time to do it all.

## Dedicated to work and home

For 23 years, Harrison was a Day Surgery Nurse at Scottish Rite. Using education assistance, Harrison completed her BSN in nursing and is now a Clinical Patient Safety Coordinator. But Harrison is more than just degrees and clinical work. She is a mother of three, two daughters and a son, two of which followed in her footsteps and now work at Children's.

"I can say without a doubt that my mother believes in Children's with her whole heart, and she strives

to bring the best people to work alongside her," said Amy Rawls, Orthopedic Technician and Harrison's daughter. "She deserves all the recognition we can send her way. She's a wonderful mother, and Children's employee. She's why I'm a Children's employee, too."

Harrison's daughter, inspired by her mother's ability to balance her home-life with her work-life, found a way to honor her through the Mother of the Year awards. And it is because of her mother's dedication to her work and her family that Rawls knew Children's was also the place for her. It was Harrison's enthusiasm for her job and her career that inspired Rawls to go back to school and pursue a career in nursing.

Even though Harrison is far from a new mom, with her youngest daughter now in college, she can relate to any parent who's juggling work and parenting. She is now adjusting to being an empty nester and a grandmother. She enjoys spending time with her two grandchildren and has started taking ballroom dancing classes with her husband. She has also completed the IronGirl triathlon twice with her daughters.

"Working and being a parent is a delicate balance, but with the help of my husband, I have three amazing children," said Harrison. "There were days that I struggled, like any parent, but I'm so thankful that Children's made it possible to have a career that I love while still having time for my family. I have room in my life to love my job and my family and that's something a lot of people can't say."

### From computers to blood pressure cuffs

Pacifico is a husband, father of two and a registered nurse. But life hasn't always looked like it does now. Before working the night shift at Scottish Rite's TICU, Pacifico was a full-time computer professional. Finding himself with little time for his family and even less time for himself, he knew something had to change.

Pacifico went back to school and completed his nursing degree so he could join the Children's family. His new compact schedule of three night shifts a week, allows him to act as a part-time, stay-at-home Dad to his two children, Mia and Alexandra, ages 5 and 8.

Although working nights has its own challenges, Pacifico believes that having extra time during the day allows him to be a more involved father. While most working parents are absent from field trips and day-time activities, Pacifico is free to be a chaperone and man the bake sale table at his girls' school. He now has more time for his entire family and even made room in his schedule to reach a personal fitness goal.

Pacifico's family is so active, that he recently took advantage of the Strong4Life Program and lost 50 pounds so he could keep up with them. "I can state with confidence that we can thank Strong4Life for getting the entire family healthy," said Pacifico. "Losing the weight has made me a better dad and husband."

"I couldn't be a great dad, husband and employee without a little help. We all know that life throws things at you that you don't expect, but if you have the right support system in place, you can get through anything," said Pacifico. "I'm so grateful that I have so many people, from my co-workers to my entire family, standing behind me. I wouldn't be a good parent without them."

Pacifico turned his life upside down to make sure that his family was healthy and happy. He changed his career path and his habits and made more time for what's important. His motivation to change along with a little help from Children's makes Pacifico a super parent. 🍌

*Do you know someone who should be considered for the Working Mother or Working Father of the year awards? Submit application requests to [worklifebalance@choa.org](mailto:worklifebalance@choa.org) by July 31.*





## Question:

# How do you find a brain tumor? Here's a hint: It's blue.

Talk about a brainstorm. A recent discovery by Barun Brahma, M.D., a Children's neurosurgeon and biomedical engineer, is changing the way surgeons around the world are looking at brain surgery.

Through his work at Children's, Dr. Brahma has access to very sophisticated imaging technology, like MRIs, that can distinguish cancerous tissue from healthy. But there are plenty of surgeons working without MRIs, and Dr. Brahma wanted to develop a technique for those doctors to distinguish the bad tissue from the good, especially while operating.

That's when a Georgia Tech professor came into the picture. Dr. Brahma took his questions and ideas to Ravi Bellamkonda at Georgia Tech, and their collaboration is making scientific history.

Dr. Bellamkonda's Biomedical Engineering lab developed a special nanocarrier, a tiny molecule that can target and attach to cancer cells. The nanocarrier

would carry a clinically approved blue dye to the tumor and stain it, while excluding normal brain matter.

Dr. Bellamkonda and his team tested the procedure by injecting tumor cells into the brains of rats. And the blue-stained nanocarriers performed exactly as researchers had hoped. The rats' tumors appeared blue, while healthy portions of their brains remained the same. The test was a success.

The technique is still in the testing phase, but scientists and physicians alike are looking forward to the day when the method makes its way out of the lab and in to the operating room. This discovery is incredibly promising for hospitals worldwide that lack machines to guide tumor removal. In fact, the new technique even has the potential to help neurosurgeons save children in some of the most remote parts of the world.

Doctors Brahma and Bellamkonda published their work in March in the journal *Drug Delivery and*

*Translational Medicine and The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* featured their work in the same month. Now, they're working with other researchers on a range of nanotechnologies designed to treat brain tumors, as well as traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries.

Adding to the excitement of a local scientific breakthrough, the funding for the research was also local, thanks to the Ian's Friends Foundation in Atlanta and the Georgia Cancer Coalition. The work of doctors Brahma and Bellamkonda, along with their teams, embodies the power and potential of the partnership between Children's and Georgia Tech.

So, someday, when staining brain tumors blue becomes a common procedure for hospitals lacking more sophisticated methods, you can say you were right here in the front row, watching an idea become a lifesaver. 🍷

**Next question?**

# Personalized Patient Care: The Future of Cures

When scientists use genetic information to predict the behavior of and best treatment for cancer, the challenge is in the formula. Determining what information is necessary and what can be tossed aside is the trick. And California-based software company NextBio believes they are on the right track to providing personalized care to patients with medulloblastoma.

NextBio recently announced a partnership with Emory University, Winship Cancer Institute and the Aflac Cancer Center, aimed at using their formulae to interpret molecular and genomic data from children with medulloblastoma. In essence, scientists gather data from human DNA and use that

of his career to researching medulloblastoma. The challenge remains how to differentiate between children who need radio-therapy and those who can be spared from the procedure. That's where a partnership with NextBio and Emory University will be extremely helpful.

MacDonald will oversee the study of tumor tissue samples and the comparison of their genetic makeup. His findings will then be sent to NextBio, which will put the genomic information through its unique evaluation platform and rank the changes in order of degree of significance of alteration. This is the formula, their proprietary platform in which they are able to digest and analyze the information.

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**Partnerships with NextBio and Emory University will be extremely helpful in overcoming the challenge of differentiating between children who need radio-therapy and those who can be spared the procedure.**

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information to determine what causes certain types of cancer and how it can best be treated. The goal is to match treatment to data rather than treat all cases with radiation, as is the current procedure.

Medulloblastoma affects around 500 children in the United States every year. This tumor primarily affects children between the ages of 5 and 9 and accounts for 20 percent of all brain tumors in children younger than 19. The first step in changing the approach to treating medulloblastoma is to figure out which of the genetic alterations needs to be treated.

"The problem with giving radiation to all children with medulloblastoma is that it causes long-term side effects and toxicity in young growing brains," said Tobey MacDonald, M.D., Director, Brain Tumor Program at the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center and Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Emory University.

Dr. MacDonald is also the principal investigator of the study and has devoted more than 10 years

Once the significant pathways of function are identified as potential candidates for treatment, they will be run through the clinical identification platform to see which drugs are best for treatment.

Zeroing in on which medication will be most effective means a more specific, personalized approach. Also, a lot fewer children will undergo radiation.

Said MacDonald, "The ultimate goal is to take actual patients, feed genomic information in the NextBio platform and respond with a treatment combination that is as minimally invasive and impactful to the patient. Because of this partnership with NextBio and Emory University, we believe that our end goal isn't very far off."

Children's believes that personalized care is the future of medicine. Every patient is unique and may require a different type of treatment. With partnerships like those with NextBio and Emory, patients will experience the exact treatment they need to fight the exact mutation of the disease they have. 📍

# Honoring *Big Hearts*



A hospital can only be as great as the people who breathe life into it each and every day. You spend all of your time making Children's a special place, and it doesn't go unnoticed.

Children's recognizes the dedication it takes to go above and beyond the call of duty each and every day, and sometimes it may not be easy. Children's employees are the best of the best, and that's what keeps our patients and their families coming back time and time again. It takes extraordinary people to be a part of the Children's family, and you deserve to be celebrated.

Go ahead, be the eyes and ears of Children's; that way, the entire organization can celebrate your accomplishments, big and small. If you see a colleague going above and beyond, tell someone. Send them a Celebrations card, nominate them for the Hope and Will awards, and make sure that you're noticing their hard work. With awards like the DAISY Awards for outstanding nurses and Service Awards for dedicating your talents to Children's, there is something for everyone.

## Hope & Will Awards

Perhaps the most coveted recognition offered by Children's are the Hope and Will Awards, which celebrates employees who represent the values of Children's in their day-to-day work. Named after our boy and girl brand ambassadors, the awards recognize staff members who embody a hopeful attitude and strong will, inspiring their co-workers with their outstanding customer service and passionate commitment.

"I know it may sound cliché, but being recognized by the people that you work with day in and day out is the best feeling," said honoree Catherine Shields. "I don't do what I do for the recognition, but it makes my days even better to know people notice my hard work."



## The DAISY Award

Recognition of exemplary staff at Children's is not limited to internal programs. The DAISY Awards are given to two nurses each month by the DAISY Foundation in memory of J. Patrick Barnes. After Barnes was diagnosed with idiopathic thrombocytopenia Purpura (ITP) and passed away in late 1999, his family, including his young widow Tena, wanted to honor the unsung heroes—the nurses—who cared for Barnes during those final weeks in the hospital.

"Children's was one of the first hospitals in the state of Georgia to be approached by the DAISY Foundation," explained Joyce Ramsey-Coleman, Chief Nurse Executive. "Of course, we're thrilled to work with the organization. Our nurses are some of



the many shining stars in our organization, and we want to celebrate their great work any way we can.”

### Service Awards

Although this isn't a nomination-driven award, that doesn't mean that service anniversaries shouldn't be recognized as major accomplishments. Children's is proud to have employees who have been with us for 30, 35, even 45 years. Service Awards are celebrated every September, and they celebrate every five years of work. To pay tribute to those who stay at Children's for 35 years or longer, Children's gifts the winners with a limousine and day at the spa followed by an awards dinner and overnight accommodations. This past year even saw one winner, Janie Cowins, reach 45 years of service—

a feat that only a small number have achieved in the history of Service Awards at Children's.

Of course, it's not about trophies or certificates around here. It's all about the patients and making kids better today and healthier tomorrow. Your dedication and commitment to the children of Georgia is rare; it can't be found just anywhere. Whether you're one of our recognized winners or not, you're part of something very special here at Children's.

*For more information on nominating your peers for an award, visit the [Total Rewards](#) page on [Careforce Connection](#). 📧*



### Hope & Will Award Recipients

The following employees were applauded at the Hope & Will Award luncheon in mid-March, held at Villa Christina: Ed Callaway, Supply Chair/Courier at DeKalb Industrial Way; Vincent Edge, IS&T at The Park; Sylvia Hampton, IS&T at Egleston; Linda Harris, Nurse Advice Line at The Park; Michael Goodman, Emergency Department at Scottish Rite; Diane Krawczyk, Day Surgery at Scottish Rite; Catherine Shields, Child Life at Egleston; and Daniel Thompson, Government Affairs at The Park.

I ♥  
Children's



## I ♥ Activities

Children's is committed to its employees and their families. That's because Children's is more than just a job, it's an organization with a Mission. That Mission extends beyond our patients to their families and to yours. So, get out there and enjoy some fun with your colleagues, friends and families at the next Children's event. There's something for everyone. If you're into running, sign up for an upcoming race. If sports are your thing, there are events ranging from college baseball to golf tournaments. So, hit the pavement, try your hand at a sport that peaks your interest, get out there and do something with Children's. Check Careforce Connection for upcoming events and activities.



Keep an eye out for some of the Children's employees seen above. You might run into them rock-climbing in their Strong4Life gear or getting fit at the annual Kaiser Permanente Corporate Run/Walk. Every day is a good day to get out there and do something.



# A Perfect Moment

By Tribune Head, Staff Nurse, Hematology/Oncology, Egleston

When my adorable daughter, Meghan, was just 7 months old we were told she had leukemia. So, we immediately switched into action mode, determined to beat the cancer together, as a family. After her diagnosis, she underwent chemotherapy followed by a bone marrow transplant from her twin sister, Rachel. She was in remission for a short time, but at the age of 3, she relapsed with lymphoma and had to receive chemotherapy and a second bone marrow transplant. After her second bout with leukemia, she went into remission, and we were convinced this would be the last hurdle she would have to clear.

After 17 years of good health, we thought we had seen the end of hospital stays and treatments. That was until, at the age of 20, Meghan suffered a stroke. The chemotherapy she received as an infant damaged her heart so badly that she needed a heart transplant. Through what can only be described as a miracle, she received her new heart this past November. Our family was so excited for Meghan that we thought there was nothing that could compete with a new heart. We would soon be proved wrong in the most wonderful way.

After everything our family had been through, we are amazed by Meghan's optimism and passion for life. But, there is one thing in particular that always raised Meghan's spirits—dolphins.

Meghan has always loved dolphins, and she never misses an opportunity to tell people how much she wants to be a dolphin trainer one day. When Meghan shared her dream of working with dolphins with Ginger Tuminello, Child Life Specialist, we had no idea that Ginger soon would be making that dream a reality. Everyone who heard Meghan's story was so touched, and Ginger was no exception. She reached out to The Georgia Aquarium, which arranged for Meghan to meet and interact with a very special dolphin named Lily.

When Meghan met Lily, it was a magical day for all of us. I watched her laugh, smile and experience pure joy. It was one of those perfect



▶ Meghan living her dream of working with dolphins at The Georgia Aquarium this past winter.

moments as a parent. Meghan kept saying, "I can't believe I kissed a dolphin," over and over.

I was overwhelmed and extremely grateful to Children's for making this happen for Meghan. I've been a nurse here for 28 years, and I am proud to work for an organization that creates once-in-a-lifetime experiences for patients. We do amazing work here, and I can't imagine having a job anywhere else.

Being a parent of a sick child has definitely made me a better nurse. I've been in the parents' shoes, I've been scared, and I've waited anxiously for results and treatment. I can truly empathize with parents, and if I tell them, "I know how you feel," I mean it.

Through this entire experience, I believed with my whole heart that Meghan was in good hands at Children's. She has received such wonderful care, and I am thankful that we have access to caregivers and resources like this.

This has been an experience we will never forget. We've been through a lot, but our adorable 7-month-old baby has grown into a beautiful woman, and she is still here. We feel blessed. 🐬

# Get ready to sweat.



**MISSION: SLIMPOSSIBLE**

Mission: Slimpossible is back.  
Stay tuned for more information on  
Careforce Connection this summer.

Comments? Suggestions? Questions? Email [Internal.Communications@choa.org](mailto:Internal.Communications@choa.org)

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