

# Transforming Lives

READING HEALTH SYSTEM FOUNDATION & THE FRIENDS OF READING HOSPITAL

FALL 2016



## REALIZING VISIONARY IDEAS

A new grant program supports innovators in the Reading Health community

**INSIDE:** A generous donor funds neuroscience research in collaboration with Johns Hopkins / Externships for the nurses of tomorrow / News and notes from The Friends of Reading Hospital



READING HEALTH SYSTEM  
FOUNDATION

Advancing Health. Transforming Lives.

# WELCOME

## Dear Colleagues:

Greetings on behalf of the Reading Health System Foundation board.

As you may know, after more than 150 years of the existence of Reading Hospital, the Reading Health System Foundation board was established almost two years ago to create an opportunity for community members to give back to the hospital that has given so much to them.



However, instead of putting these generous donations to current operations, the Foundation has followed its mission to invest in transformative care to ensure that Reading Health System continues to provide state-of-the-art care for years to come.

With that in mind, the Foundation has launched a grant program to support new initiatives in three areas that will most benefit our community: innovation, education and research. Already, the first wave of this program has awarded more than \$256,000 to nine projects led by Reading Hospital physicians, nurses and others.

The Foundation is proud to present the inaugural issue of *Transforming Lives*, which offers more information on these exciting new initiatives. In these pages, you will learn more about how the new grant program will continue Reading Health System's long tradition of being a high-quality healthcare institution. On behalf of our new Foundation, I am honored to play a role in supporting Reading Health System's continued growth and success.

Sincerely,



Chris G. Kraras, Chairman  
Reading Health System Foundation

## The Care Champion Program Invites Patients to Make Gifts of Gratitude

During a hospital stay, a sympathetic doctor, nurse, technician or volunteer can make all the difference when it comes to helping patients feel comfortable. Now, with the Reading Health System Foundation's Care Champion Program, patients can make a difference for their caregivers as well.

In this new program, patients and families can make a gift to the Foundation in honor of a specific caregiver who has enriched their life. The message attached to the gift will be shared with not only the honoree but also his or her supervisor or colleagues, letting others know about the caregiver's positive impact. Additionally, the donations support Reading Health System in its continuing effort to provide high-quality, transformative patient care and state-of-the-art technology.

To learn more about the Care Champion Program, please call 484-628-2243 or visit [www.readinghealth.org/foundation](http://www.readinghealth.org/foundation).

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

Every gift, no matter how big or small, helps us continue to make a difference in the health and well-being of our community members. By making a tax-deductible gift to the Foundation, you are supporting our vital mission to advance care and transform lives through innovation, education and research. To learn more, please contact Foundation President Kate Thornton at 484-628-2243 or [katherine.thornton@readinghealth.org](mailto:katherine.thornton@readinghealth.org).



## READING HEALTH SYSTEM FOUNDATION

Advancing Health. Transforming Lives.

### READING HEALTH SYSTEM FOUNDATION

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# Partners in Neuroscience

A GENEROUS GIFT SUPPORTS A NEW COLLABORATION BETWEEN READING HEALTH AND JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

After a relative received outstanding clinical care from H. Christopher Lawson, MD, Sergei Szortyka and his family decided to make a generous gift to Reading Health System. Szortyka is the president of Quaker Maid Meats, a family-owned and -operated business based in Reading.



H. Christopher Lawson, MD

"I took care of a Szortyka family member, and it was a great experience," explains Dr. Lawson, a leading neurosurgeon. "That sparked the family's interest in contributing to the field of neuroscience."

Funds from the gift will support the creation of a research partnership between Reading Health and Johns Hopkins University. Potential areas of interest involve the deep brain stimulation program at Reading Health's Movement Disorders Clinic, and leading-edge approaches to surgery at Reading Health's Spine and Brain Neurosurgery Center.

Dr. Lawson, who trained at Johns Hopkins, says this collaboration will greatly advance neuroscience care in Berks County — and he credits the Szortyka family for making it possible. "The Szortyka family is very appreciative of what we do here," he says. "I am grateful and humbled by this generous recognition from them."

*"The Szortyka family is very appreciative of what we do here. I am grateful and humbled by this generous recognition from them."*

— H. CHRISTOPHER LAWSON, MD



The first two students to participate in the nursing externship program were Erin Boston (above) and Ndeye Gueye (right).



## Externships for Tomorrow's Nurses

Nursing students can now gain valuable patient experience within Reading Health System, thanks to a new donor-supported program. Backed by the Susan Long, BSN, RN & Wayne Long Memorial Fund of the Reading Health System Foundation, the program gives two to three nursing students the chance to work as paid externs each year. To be eligible, students must be enrolled in the Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences – Nursing Program.

Janet Long, a longtime hospital volunteer, member of the Women's Auxiliary board and member of The Friends of Reading Hospital, began the fund in 2008 in memory of her husband, Wayne, and daughter, Susan.

Students Ndeye Gueye and Erin Boston were the inaugural beneficiaries of the program — an experience they both found immensely rewarding. Gueye credits the externship with giving her a deeper understanding of what it means to be a nurse, from the everyday aspects of the job to the inevitable curveballs that come with it. Boston praises the program as a "wonderful opportunity. There were even a few times when patients mistook me for a registered nurse," she says. "Those moments showed me that I'm headed in the right direction!"

Indeed she is. Both she and Gueye graduated in June and have already been hired by Reading Hospital.

# Advancing the Future of Patient Care

A NEW GRANT PROGRAM LAUNCHED BY THE READING HEALTH SYSTEM FOUNDATION IS HELPING TO TURN VISIONARY IDEAS INTO REALITY

The Reading Health System Foundation was formed in January 2015 to support the hospital's commitment to providing the highest level of transformative patient care.

"We focus on three main areas: innovation, education and research," Foundation President Kate Thornton explains, "and we have recently begun to fund projects within those areas that align with the health system's strategic plan for growth and development."

Earlier this year, the Foundation announced it would accept grant proposals from members of the Reading Health System community, and out of 24 submissions, nine were chosen. The proposals all showed wide-ranging and forward-thinking visions, and the Foundation is deeply honored to help bring these exciting ideas to fruition.

There will be two grant cycles each year, Thornton adds, with an annual dispersal of \$500,000 in total grants. These grants are made possible by donors' generous contributions to Reading Health System in unrestricted funds.

FOLLOWING IS AN OVERVIEW OF THE FIRST ROUND OF GRANT RECIPIENTS:

## 1. BABYSCRIPTS MOBILE APP

This innovative approach to prenatal care gives pregnant women an efficient way to track their weight, blood pressure and general health via a mobile app. The information is transmitted to their doctor's office via Bluetooth, allowing women to receive real-time updates and communicate efficiently with their physician.

## 2. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH HOME

This grant will support the training of staff members who can coordinate healthcare for patients with serious mental illnesses. Too often, patients with mental illnesses don't (or are unable to) take care of their physical health, and this program will connect them with primary care physicians.

## 3. COMMUNITY CARE NAVIGATORS

Selected paramedics and EMS staff are being trained to work as patient navigators, who will visit patients in their homes following discharge from the hospital. In particular, the navigators will follow up with patients who are at risk after having had heart procedures at the hospital. This proactive approach to patient care helps to reduce complications and readmissions; it also provides a high degree of compassionate and personalized care.

## 4. DERMOSCOPY AND TELEMEDICINE

Dermoscopes — specialized instruments used in the detection of skin lesions — are essential tools for diagnosing melanoma. This proposal aims to acquire dermatoscopes for use by primary care physicians, who can then transmit images to dermatologists for evaluation. This technology will help to eliminate unnecessary referrals to specialists in the event that the evaluation is negative, saving time for both patients and physicians.

## 5. ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS REVIEW

Reading Health has begun collaborating with Johns Hopkins University to improve the potential security risks of electronic health records. This project, which involves



implementing a peer-to-peer review of the behaviors in the use of these records, aims to improve processes, standardize evaluation objectives and develop a research agenda for further study.

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#### 6. EPIC WORKFLOW VOICE COMMANDS

After patient visits and procedures, physicians document the information they have gathered using the Epic electronic medical record system. This innovative proposal will enable physicians to communicate their notes verbally, streamlining the record-keeping practice and saving valuable time.

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#### 7. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM TECHNOLOGY AND READMISSION RATES

This project will identify the communities in Berks County that have a greater incidence of such conditions as heart disease, obesity and diabetes. By finding the locations that might need more support and that have the greatest rates of readmissions, the health system can focus on outreach and education in those targeted areas.

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#### 8. MRI IN PATIENTS WITH PACEMAKERS AND IMPLANTED CARDIOVERTER DEFIBRILLATORS

Another collaborative project with Johns Hopkins University, this research project will study the safety of MRIs for patients with permanent pacemakers and implanted cardioverter defibrillators. In the past, these devices needed to be turned off prior to patients having MRIs; this venture will test a new protocol to see if the devices can remain on.

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#### 9. YOUTH EDUCATION

This initiative will help to create “pathways to healthcare” for high school students who are interested in pursuing STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields. By educating young people about possible careers in healthcare, Reading Health will help to nurture and inspire the next generation of medical professionals.

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The second round of grant recipients will be announced on December 13.

## SPOTLIGHT ON FRIENDS

### From the President of The Friends:

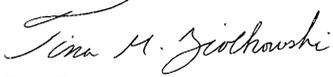
Greetings and welcome to the first edition of *Transforming Lives*. This magazine has been a long time in the making and will bring you the latest news and information about The Friends' current projects and fundraising activities.

When we set out to create this magazine, we had hoped to share the story behind the events and initiatives created by The Friends that have greatly impacted the hospital and community. These stories demonstrate the far-reaching impact that a committed group of individuals can have when working together toward a common goal.

Become part of a giving tradition that is over 125 years old. The Friends are passionate about improving the quality of healthcare in Berks County. If you would like to volunteer your time and talents, please contact the Volunteer Office.

We hope you find this magazine informative and entertaining. We thank all Friends past and present for their dedication and passion for bettering the community.

Sincerely,



Tina Ziolkowski  
Board President



## CenteringParenting

Reading Hospital's CenteringParenting program brings together six to eight similarly aged infants and their parents/caregivers for group meetings with their healthcare providers. This model fosters a supportive environment in which parents can ask questions, with the ultimate goal of creating lifelong bonds between families. Discussions focus on growth monitoring, immunization, developmental screening, play, child development, parenting skills and stress management. There are currently 11 groups, with three to nine families in each.

Reading Hospital is one of only three sites hosting Centering-Parenting groups in Pennsylvania; the program is supported with funds from The Friends of Reading Hospital.

Feedback from both families and staff members has been overwhelmingly positive. Said one parent, "CenteringParenting will help me take better care of my child."

## Tower Golf Classic

The Friends of Reading Hospital hosted the 15th Annual Tower Golf Classic on August 9 at LedgeRock Golf Club, raising more than \$100,000 in support of several projects. Patrick Colarusso, DO, a medical oncologist with the Reading Health Physician Network, accepted an honorary check for \$50,000 on behalf of McGlenn Cancer Institute. The proceeds will allow the institute to provide its oncology patients with cold cap therapy, an innovative approach to minimizing hair loss. Through the use of cooled caps that constrict the blood vessels in the scalp, hair follicles are better protected from damage. This initiative will help alleviate the anxiety over hair loss experienced by many patients undergoing chemotherapy.



Above, from left: Administrative Director of McGlenn Cancer Institute Sharon Craig; President of The Friends of Reading Hospital Tina Ziolkowski; Reading Health CEO Clint Matthews; and Patrick Colarusso, DO, who accepted an honorary check on behalf of McGlenn Cancer Institute at the Tower Golf Classic.

## PHILANTHROPY AT WORK

### NEW PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE FRIENDS OF READING HOSPITAL

#### BERKS FARM BUCKS

The Penn Street Market is partnering with The Friends to bring the Berks Farm Bucks program to Reading Health, enabling users of the Access Card; Senior FMNP vouchers; and the Women, Infants and Children Farmers' Market Nutrition Program to shop at the market. Held every Thursday from May through October, the Penn Street Market is a project of ReDesign Reading CDC. "The purpose of the program is to encourage higher rates of consumption of fresh produce, which has been shown to correlate to better health outcomes," says Lucine Sihelnik, food systems director for ReDesign Reading.

#### TELEMEDICINE FOR STROKE PATIENTS

An innovative new effort to help stroke patients, the telemedicine project was developed for use by emergency personnel. The program uses the FaceTime app to quickly and accurately evaluate stroke symptoms and alert the stroke team at Reading Hospital to prepare for the patient's arrival.

#### HEARTSAFE BERKS COUNTY

Initiated by cardiologist Michael Koslow, MD, HeartSAFE Berks County has funded and donated more than 500 automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to first responders, police officers, high schools, middle schools, colleges and



**Above:** A Friends-supported food service van brings fresh and healthy meals as well as snacks to at-risk youth.

universities throughout Berks County. To date, approximately 10 individuals have survived a sudden cardiac arrest using one of these AEDs.

#### NICU CYCLED LIGHTING PROJECT

An automated cycled lighting system has been installed in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) to create a smoother transition from light to dark and back again. Studies have shown that this type of lighting helps infants develop more normal sleep and wake patterns, allowing them to sleep better overall. This leads to less crying, better weight gain, fewer days on the ventilator and better neurodevelopmental outcomes.

#### FOOD SERVICE VAN FOR AT-RISK YOUTH

The Friends are funding a food service van for year-round meal delivery to at-risk city youth. Fresh and healthy meals and snacks are brought to the Reading Recreation Commission's two recreation centers, six Reading School District locations, eight summer playground programs, two after-school programs and participants in the COR Tennis program.



## The Peaceful Healing Garden

The curative power of nature has been an integral part of Reading Hospital ever since renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted designed the lush grounds in 1926. In this vein of enhancing well-being through attention to the environment, the first Healing Garden was established near McGlinn Cancer Institute some 10 years ago, creating a place for employees, patients and families to reflect and relax. The Friends of Reading Hospital provided funding for this project, along with the opportunity to dedicate trees and brick pavers in tribute to loved ones. Many people have enjoyed this healing space over the years — a tradition that will continue to grow with the new HealthPlex rooftop garden.



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## SAVE THE DATES!



### December 1 Holiday Happening

Pick up one-of-a-kind holiday gifts — including gourmet food items, holiday arrangements, candles and handcrafted jewelry — at Reading Hospital's annual craft fair. Held in the hospital's 5th Avenue Lobby between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., the fair is a benefit for programs funded by The Friends of Reading Hospital.

For more information, visit [www.readinghealth.org/contribute/volunteer/friends-board/holiday-happening](http://www.readinghealth.org/contribute/volunteer/friends-board/holiday-happening).



Visit the shops in Reading Hospital and Reading Rehabilitation Hospital for special holiday gifts!



To learn more about The Friends of Reading Hospital and the events they sponsor, visit [www.readinghealth.org/contribute/volunteer/friends-board](http://www.readinghealth.org/contribute/volunteer/friends-board), call 484-628-8477 or email [friends@readinghealth.org](mailto:friends@readinghealth.org).

### DECEMBER 13 — GRANT CYCLE II RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

Thanks to donors' generous contributions, the Reading Health System Foundation will award its second round of grants to support projects that strive to advance patient care.