

# FOUNDATION FOR **Health**

SUTTER  
NORTH BAY  
EDITION  
FALL 2024

## **Generosity Advances Innovation at Sutter Health**

Susan & Lawrence Amatore  
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# The Power of Possibility



## Welcome to an exciting new era at Sutter Health!

Our dynamic CEO, Warner Thomas, is leading our journey to realizing the full potential of our nonprofit network. Our progress can be measured in the national recognition Sutter is receiving for excellence in delivering high-quality, equitable patient care.

As we commit to expanding access, an ever-growing number of patients are relying on our integrated system to meet their individual healthcare needs—from primary care to the most advanced treatments—in large and small cities, rural towns and communities across Northern and Central California.

Our generous donors are fueling a new era in Sutter Health philanthropy. Over the past year, forward-thinking benefactors have made unprecedented philanthropic investments, including gifts that have established our first endowed chair for cardiology research and created a new training program that will enable clinicians to build essential real-world skills not commonly taught in their formal education. We were also humbled and inspired to receive the single largest donation in Sutter Health's long history.

In this edition of *Foundation for Health*, you can read about the many ways philanthropy is advancing innovative care throughout the North Bay at this incredible moment. On page 14, you'll learn how interventional cardiologist David Daniels, M.D., is innovating the next frontier of valve replacement procedures at California Pacific Medical Center, aided by donor support. And on page 32, you'll meet Susan and Lawrence Amatore, whose foundational investment in a Sutter Pacific Medical Foundation pediatrics program is fostering early literacy throughout Sonoma County.

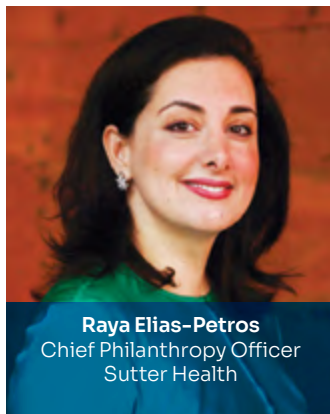
Please enjoy reading about all that your generosity made possible in 2023 and so far this year. As we kick off philanthropic giving season, we hope you will consider continuing your support of Sutter in Marin and Sonoma counties knowing that your contribution has the power to make your community healthier.

**The future of healthcare is in our hands.** Together, we can help ensure that Sutter Health is driving a future in which patients enjoy enhanced access to a full continuum of world-class health services, better everyday health through digital technology, truly transformative mental healthcare and so much more.

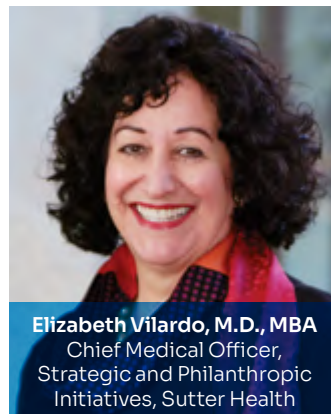
On behalf of the local clinicians who depend on philanthropy to pursue their best ideas for improving healthcare and the patients who benefit from their expertise—thank you for your generous support.

We are so grateful for your trust. Please contact Lisa Amador at [lisa.amador@sutterhealth.org](mailto:lisa.amador@sutterhealth.org) or Ryan Pocock at [ryan.pocock@sutterhealth.org](mailto:ryan.pocock@sutterhealth.org) to discuss how we can help you achieve your philanthropic goals.

With heartfelt gratitude,



**Raya Elias-Petros**  
Chief Philanthropy Officer  
Sutter Health



**Elizabeth Vilardo, M.D., MBA**  
Chief Medical Officer,  
Strategic and Philanthropic  
Initiatives, Sutter Health

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For questions or comments, email us at [giving@sutterhealth.org](mailto:giving@sutterhealth.org).



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*Foundation for Health*  
is published by  
Sutter Health.  
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# Sutter Health NEWS

## Sutter Cardiologists Perform Bay Area's First TriClip Valve Repair

Experts at Sutter Alta Bates Summit Medical Center collaborated on a tricuspid valve repair using the TriClip™ Transcatheter Edge-to-Edge Repair system—a first for the Bay Area outside of clinical trials. Oakland resident Aylean Smith, who turns 90 in October, feels “wonderful” after the low-risk, minimally invasive procedure.



TriClip received Food and Drug Administration approval in April to treat tricuspid regurgitation, which occurs when the heart's tricuspid valve doesn't close properly, causing a backflow of blood into the right atrium. Left untreated, it can lead to organ failure or death.

Aylean's cardiologist, Duane Stephens, M.D., diagnosed her with severe tricuspid regurgitation, suspecting it was causing her progressive heart failure symptoms. To confirm, she underwent a transesophageal echocardiogram with cardiologist Luisa Munoz, M.D., Ph.D., before being referred to structural cardiologist Christian Spies, M.D., who led clinical trial enrollment at Sutter California Pacific Medical Center for this device.

Aylean had excess fluid in her right atrium and ventricle, so she spent five days in the hospital receiving treatment to reduce the pressure on her heart. She was then readmitted the morning of her procedure for general anesthesia with Jess Shurter, M.D. Next, Michael Tsang, M.D., performed transesophageal echocardiography, supplemented by 4D intracardiac echocardiography evaluation—a first at ABSMC—which utilizes 3D reconstructed images to create real-time videos of the heart via a catheter.

Finally, Dr. Spies and Mitul Kadakia, M.D., performed the valve repair, implanting two TriClip devices and instantly reducing Aylean's tricuspid regurgitation from severe to mild. They completed the procedure in less than one hour, and Aylean was discharged the next day.



Oakland resident Aylean Smith feels “wonderful” following a successful TriClip valve procedure at ABSMC in June.



## CPMC, Eden Medical Center Deploy World's First Wearable Doppler Ultrasound Patch

Sutter Health implemented Flosionics Medical's FloPatch, the world's first wireless, wearable Doppler ultrasound device for intensive care patients, at Eden Medical Center and California Pacific Medical Center's Van Ness, Davies and Mission Bernal campuses this summer. The hands-free device provides a fast, simple, consistent method of measuring changes in blood flow and heart function related to intravenous fluid volume.

Determining how much IV fluid to administer is among the most urgent, complicated and error-prone interventions in ICUs. By facilitating greater precision in IV fluid management, FloPatch improves care for critically ill patients, including those with septic shock, the leading cause of death in U.S. hospitals.

Placed on a patient's neck, FloPatch continuously assesses blood flow in the carotid arteries, then transmits that information to a secure mobile application, giving clinicians actionable, real-time data at the bedside. A recent study demonstrated that for every 10 FloPatch assessments performed in the emergency department, four patients will avoid potentially dangerous fluid overload.



## New PAMF Care Center Coming to Livermore in 2025

Sutter Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) is renovating an 11,000-square-foot space at 7683 Southfront Road in Livermore, aiming to open a new care center next summer. Boasting 16 exam rooms and accommodating eight providers and their care teams, the location will offer internal and family medicine, pediatrics, and lab and imaging services.

Along with expanding PAMF's presence in the East Bay, the center is part of Sutter's plan to add more than 25 new ambulatory care centers systemwide.

“We are excited to enhance healthcare access for the residents of Livermore and surrounding communities,” says Kurt VandeVort, M.D., CEO of the Palo Alto Foundation Medical Group. “This care center builds on Sutter and PAMF's established reputations in Dublin, Fremont and Danville as we extend outpatient services in the community.”

## Smart Pump Interoperability Enhances Safe Medication Delivery

This summer Sutter Health rolled out the final phase of an extensive, multiyear smart pump project, designed to ensure safer delivery of intravenous medications. In 2022, the network installed more than 8,000 smart infusion pump devices and consolidated 26 hospital-specific drug libraries into a single IV drug library. The initiative's last phase—smart pump interoperability—establishes seamless connection between the devices and Sutter's electronic health record to further enhance the efficiency and safety of medication administration.



## TIMELESS Clinical Trial Informs Future of Stroke Care

When Lyle Vanhorn woke up one morning in 2022 unable to speak or fully move, the 59-year-old knew something was drastically wrong. The quick actions of his wife and of stroke specialists at Sutter Health saved Lyle's life, and today he shows no signs of ever having a stroke. But his participation in a study on stroke drug tenecteplase, or TNK, may have a profound impact on future stroke care delivery.

When people experience ischemic stroke, their brain cells begin dying seconds after a clot blocks blood flow and oxygen to the brain, increasing the risk of disability and death.

"Thankfully, the speed of innovation at Sutter Health has kept pace with the race to get patients urgent stroke care," says Manoj Mittal, M.D., medical director of stroke and neurocritical care at Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento (SMCS).

"New treatments and technologies, such as clot-busting drugs, AI-based imaging, a mobile stroke unit and tiny devices that remove clots, are helping patients recover from stroke free from disability."

Stroke specialists at Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital, where Lyle was first assessed, couldn't give him clot-dissolving TNK because he'd surpassed the 4.5-hour window

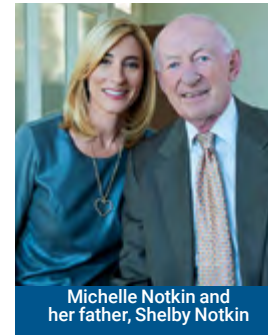
for its administration. Needing a higher level of care, he was transferred to SMCS, a designated Advanced Comprehensive Stroke Center.

At SMCS, Lyle's wife met with Dr. Mittal, co-investigator of TIMELESS, a clinical trial evaluating TNK in patients 4.5 to 24 hours after experiencing ischemic stroke or stroke symptoms. The double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled trial would give Lyle a 50% chance of receiving TNK. His wife consented on his behalf to enroll him and maximize his chance for recovery.

Bahram Varjavand, M.D., an interventional neuroradiologist at SMCS, performed a thrombectomy to remove the clot from Lyle's brain using a special device inserted through a catheter. Within hours, Lyle could speak and move normally again, and a brain MRI showed no residue of the clot.

Sutter Health was among a select few institutions in California to offer enrollment in TIMELESS, the results of which were published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in February. "Findings suggest there is no benefit of TNK in acute stroke patients who present 4.5 hours after stroke onset with a large clot in their brain," Dr. Mittal says.

However, this was the first study to show that intravenous thrombolytics, such as TNK, could be given up to 24 hours after a stroke without increased incidence of brain hemorrhage. "People like Mr. Vanhorn who are willing to participate in clinical research are key to advancing knowledge of stroke treatments," Dr. Mittal adds.



Michelle Notkin and her father, Shelby Notkin

## Notkin Family Breast Cancer Recovery Program Turns 20

The Notkin Family Breast Cancer Recovery Program, part of Sutter California Pacific Medical Center's Breast Health Center, is celebrating 20 years of seamless wraparound support for patients and their loved ones throughout the cancer journey. Established in 2004 with a generous gift from the Notkin family, the program provides nurse navigation, mental health support, social worker assistance, fertility guidance, clinical trials access and more—all at no cost to patients. Funded entirely by philanthropy, the Notkin program has helped more than 30,000 women from diagnosis through treatment and survivorship.

## Sutter Mills–Peninsula Makes History in Lung Cancer Care

In April, Sutter Mills–Peninsula Medical Center became the first hospital in San Mateo County to receive the new Ion robotic bronchoscopy platform. Developed by Intuitive Surgical, the tool enables safer, faster biopsies of suspected lung cancer, the nation's deadliest cancer. Using ultrathin shape-sensing catheters, the Ion robot carries significantly less risk of lung collapse, injury and other complications compared to traditional needle biopsies.

"With this new technology, we expect to successfully biopsy nodules in the lung that were previously too difficult to reach," says pulmonologist Alexander Zider, M.D. "This capability will help us provide prompter, more definitive diagnoses and facilitate more precise treatment plans."

Along with Mills–Peninsula, Sutter California Pacific Medical Center's Van Ness Campus, Sutter Roseville Medical Center and Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento either have or will receive the Ion for bronchoscopy.



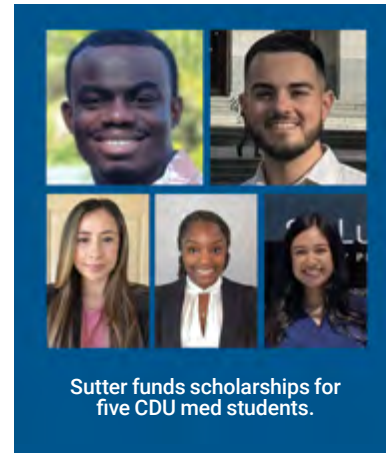
## Sutter, CDU Partner to Address Physician Shortage, Health Inequities

Sutter Health and Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science (CDU) have teamed up to tackle California's growing physician shortage and expand access to inclusive, equitable, culturally competent care. This effort launches a scholarship program designed to widen pathways for diverse physicians and establishes the Health Equity Alliance for Research and Evaluation (HEARE) incubator lab to accelerate interventions that address health inequities.

Los Angeles–based CDU opened its nationally accredited medical school in 2023, making it one of only four Historically Black Medical Schools in the U.S. Sutter's \$7.5 million investment will provide five full-tuition medical school scholarships across five cohorts (2024 to 2028), totaling 25 scholarships, and fund HEARE for five years. In June, CDU students Derrick Agbemenu, Eric Arauza, Priscilla Covarrubias, Naomi Dillard and Anaissa Medina were named the first cohort of scholars. The partnership also opens up academic and experiential learning opportunities across Sutter Health, including at the Institute for Advancing Health Equity.

Among CDU's inaugural class of 60 medical students, half are Black and nearly a quarter are Latino. Multiple studies have shown that culturally competent care leads to better health outcomes, making it critical to help those from underserved, low-income and rural communities pursue healthcare careers.

"Access to safe, high-quality, equitable care is a challenge for too many people in California, particularly for communities of color," says Leon Clark, vice president and chief academic affairs officer at Sutter Health. "This transformative work—which combines the unique strengths of two leading healthcare organizations—will address this challenge head on by tackling the physician shortage and health disparities."



Sutter funds scholarships for five CDU med students.

## Multidisciplinary Team Collaborates on Cutting-Edge Arrhythmia Treatment

For some patients with ventricular tachycardia (VT), a potentially deadly heart arrhythmia, conventional treatments such as catheter ablation are not an option. A multidisciplinary team at Sutter Health is working to offer these patients new hope.

Radiation oncologist Al Taira, M.D., along with cardiac electrophysiologists Christopher Woods, M.D., Ph.D., FHRS, and Amir Schricker, M.D., M.S., FACC, FHRS, and chief physicist Joey Cheung, Ph.D., are using a novel radiation therapy treatment to target VT. Unlike traditional ablation, this procedure is noninvasive, requires no anesthesia and takes under an hour.

The team performed its first procedure, at Sutter Mills–Peninsula Medical Center in San Mateo, in August 2020, when fewer than 100 patients nationwide had been treated by this approach. The patient had failed traditional ablations and wasn't a candidate for a heart transplant, and his life was imminently threatened by recurrent VT.

"It went seamlessly," Dr. Taira says. "The patient experienced no significant side effects and lived another 2.5 years arrhythmia free. It was a very encouraging start." The team has since performed five more successful procedures on patients ineligible for traditional treatments.

"This is a great example of One Sutter," Dr. Taira says. "We're working together across geographic boundaries and service lines to do something amazing."



# Sutter Health Accolades



Sutter Mills-Peninsula Medical Center is one of seven hospitals nationwide and the only one in California to receive 2024 Healthgrades honors in three categories—Patient Safety Excellence, Outstanding Patient Experience and **America's 50 Best Hospitals**—its second consecutive triple crown. Healthgrades also recognized Sutter's Alta Bates Summit Medical Center Alta Bates Campus, Eden Medical Center, Novato Community Hospital and Sutter Solano Medical Center for patient safety.



*U.S. News & World Report* ranked three Sutter hospitals in the **top 50 nationally** for medical specialties: Sutter Roseville Medical Center (rehabilitation), California Pacific Medical Center's Van Ness Campus (gastroenterology and GI surgery) and Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento (obstetrics and gynecology). All three, along with Alta Bates Summit Medical Center's Summit Campus, also ranked among the **best in California** for certain specialties.



The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services awarded **five stars for overall hospital quality**—the highest ranking possible—to Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital, California Pacific Medical Center's Mission Bernal Campus, Sutter Davis Hospital, Sutter Lakeside Hospital, Mills-Peninsula Medical Center, Novato Community Hospital and Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital. Eight more Sutter sites earned four stars.



For the second consecutive year, *Forbes* named Sutter Health among **America's Best Employers for Diversity**. Among the 41 healthcare systems nationwide to make the list, Sutter ranked in the top 10.

As part of the American Heart Association's **Get With The Guidelines—Stroke** program, 14 Sutter hospital campuses scored a Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award for overall stroke care, 10 earned an Elite Plus ranking on the Stroke Honor Roll and 15 made the Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll. AHA also gave Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento a Gold Plus award for high-quality treatment of heart failure.



Twenty Sutter hospitals, plus Sutter Medical Foundation and Sutter's Palo Alto Medical Foundation, were named **LGBTQ+ Healthcare Equality Leaders** 2024–2025 by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation.



Sutter Eden Medical Center, Sutter Delta Medical Center and Sutter Roseville Medical Center were named **Great Community Hospitals** by *Becker's Hospital Review*. Only eight other California hospitals earned this designation.



Sutter's Mills-Peninsula Medical Center, Novato Community Hospital and Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital earned an A on the **Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade** while seven Sutter campuses earned a B.

## Legacy Gift Bolsters Grief and Bereavement Support

Having lost both her mother and sister recently, Laura Casey knows that having the tools to process the pain, anger and sadness that often accompany grief is vital.

Laura's mom, Sandy, had a long history of health issues, including kidney failure, breast cancer and diverticulitis. Though she underwent several surgeries, doctors eventually advised stopping lifesaving treatments, and Sandy passed away in February 2020.

Seeking help with her grief, Laura discovered Sutter Care at Home (SCAH) Grief and Bereavement Support program, funded predominantly by philanthropy and free to anyone in the community. She worked closely with a grief counselor over more than a dozen sessions and found it extremely beneficial. Grateful, Laura started donating to SCAH's program each time she recommended it to someone else.

Almost a year after her mom died, Laura's sister, Kim, was diagnosed with stage 4 colorectal cancer at age 46. She underwent multiple rounds of chemotherapy and radiation but became increasingly sick from the effects. Kim died in June 2023.

A few months later, Laura connected with another grief counselor at SCAH to work through the emotional and familial challenges brought on by two successive deaths. Continuing her tradition of donating, Laura decided to leave a sizeable bequest to SCAH bereavement services in her estate plan.

Laura and Sandy Casey

"Losing a loved one is devastating, and there are people in our community who need help but can't afford it," Laura says. "I think everybody should have access to the wonderful counseling I received, and I know this gift will help."

If you're interested in supporting SCAH, contact Melissa Cohea at [melissa.cohea@sutterhealth.org](mailto:melissa.cohea@sutterhealth.org).

## Philanthropy Events Across Sutter Health



Venus Williams will keynote the Women's Health Luncheon & Lecture focusing on mental health.

- **September 19:** Mills-Peninsula Hospital Foundation's Women's Health Luncheon & Lecture with Venus Williams
- **October 4:** Sutter Santa Rosa's Catwalk for a Cure
- **October 6:** Think Pink Granite Bay
- **October 9:** Comedy & Cocktails featuring Tig Notaro, celebrating 20 years of the Notkin Family Breast Cancer Recovery Program
- **October 19:** Palo Alto Medical Foundation Santa Cruz's Toast to the Town
- **October 25:** Inaugural Women's Wisdom & Wellness Luncheon with Rita Moreno, benefitting the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Program in the East Bay

Wisdom & Wellness Luncheon with Rita Moreno, benefitting the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Program in the East Bay

- **November 1:** Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital Foundation's Faith & Fantasy Ball
- **December 2:** Sutter Roseville Medical Center's Light up a Life
- **December 5:** Sutter Novato Community Hospital's Tree of Lights



# Driving Advancements in Cardiology

Here at Sutter Health, nationally renowned cardiologists are propelling a paradigm shift in cardiovascular medicine, offering leading-edge treatments and spearheading groundbreaking research. Generous community donors make this vital work possible while ensuring that innovation in cardiology never stops. In the following pages, discover the many ways that philanthropy engenders heart care excellence and continued advancement.



## The HEART of Innovation

Whether traveling the world as a photojournalist, creating healthy food or running his new chocolate business, Jim White rarely sits still. Now into his mid-70s, he remains active, walking more than seven miles each day.

Recently, while out walking, Jim noticed that he was short of breath and his heart was racing beyond 200 beats per minute.

Paul Kitagaki Photography

"Bam! All of a sudden I was diagnosed with Afib," Jim says. "My cardiologist referred me to a specialist at Sutter CPMC in San Francisco for ablation."

Afib, short for atrial fibrillation, is the most common type of arrhythmia, or abnormal heartbeat. Marked by extremely fast or irregular beats, Afib affects millions of Americans each year. Left untreated, it can increase the risk of stroke fivefold and even lead to death.

Steven Hao, M.D., FAACC, FHRS, an electrophysiologist at Sutter California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC), treated Jim's Afib with two ablations. The procedures eliminated the double-time electrical signals causing the irregular heartbeats, allowing his heart to resume a normal rhythm.

"Sometimes the first ablation doesn't solve this problem and a second procedure is necessary," Dr. Hao says. "I've told Jim that he's like the Energizer bunny—he just keeps going and going. Even though he required two procedures, we corrected his condition, and I am confident we can keep his heart healthy."

### Prioritizing Community Health

Several decades earlier, Jim was living and working in Africa as a photojournalist, documentarian and foreign correspondent covering wars, drought and political instability. "I was arrested three times for being in the right place to get the story at the wrong time," he says. "Eventually, I thought it would be safer to head home and write about something less threatening."

Back in his native Canada, Jim became an award-winning food editor and restaurant critic for the *Toronto Star*. In Toronto, he met his wife of more than 50 years, Carol, then a food editor at *Canadian Living* magazine and one of the nation's top cookbook editors.

Over time, Jim moved from critiquing food into developing it—without harmful chemicals and preservatives. "My quest has always been to create high-quality, tasty natural products like the ones we use at home," he says.

In total, Jim developed more than 10,000 food and beverage products for supermarket private labels and leading consumer brands. "I made a commitment to change the way North Americans eat—my personal form of community service," he says.

In 1997, the Whites moved to Napa Valley, where they've lived ever since. Jim co-owned a winery for 12 years, and today he and Carol grow cabernet sauvignon grapes for a respected label.

After his Afib scare, Jim modified his goal of helping people eat healthy to helping them stay healthy, which dovetails with his desire to honor his Sutter care team. While being prepped for ablation, he found one particular Sutter nurse to be incredibly comforting.

"The nurse, Lauren, chilled me out long before the anesthesia knocked me out," Jim says. "One caring nurse, with the Sutter Health team behind her, graced my life, and I am so lucky. I knew I had to do something to reward their commitment."

### Accelerating Research

Last fall, Jim and Carol pledged \$5 million to kickstart the Heart Excellence and Responsive Treatment (HEART) initiative at Sutter

Health. The groundbreaking initiative establishes a research endowment—the first of its kind in Sutter Health's 100-year history—dedicated to translational sciences in cardiovascular disease, the number-one cause of death in the U.S.

"When we learned that Sutter Health patients comprise 1% of all American citizens, we were floored," Jim says. "Sutter has the scale and know-how to impact the way heart disease is diagnosed and treated for generations to come. We believe the HEART initiative will help everyone recognize Sutter Health as the place to be treated for heart issues."

The first endowed chair, Christopher Woods, M.D., Ph.D., FHRS, will work on translational research to help Sutter develop investigator-initiated and industry-supported clinical trials. The initiative also enables an expert team to pursue innovative treatments and therapies that improve patient care.

"Jim and Carol's generosity is critical to building a robust research program that will support our skilled clinicians in developing superior treatments and providing the best care," Dr. Hao says.

For example, at the Heart Rhythm Society's scientific sessions in May, Dr. Woods delivered a case presentation on the use of Kardium's Globe Pulsed Field Mapping and Ablation System for Afib. The device is being tested in the multicenter PULSAR clinical trial, and Sutter Health is the only West Coast study site offering patients the opportunity to enroll.

"PFA seeks to overcome the limitations of traditional ablation techniques and may be a revolutionary, safer approach to controlling Afib," Dr. Woods says. "Because pulsed field ablation is new, PULSAR represents the leading edge of novel opportunities to further refine a technique that's transforming lives."

The Whites hope others will join them in supporting this landmark endeavor. "As we approach the final chapters of our lives," Jim says, "we believe it is not how much we gather but how much we scatter that marks the kind of life we've lived."

If you're interested in supporting the HEART initiative, please contact Malissa Burke at [malissa.burke@sutterhealth.org](mailto:malissa.burke@sutterhealth.org).



Steven Hao, M.D., FACC, FHRS



Christopher Woods, M.D., Ph.D., FHRS



## Revolutionizing Valve Replacement

**R**etired Air Commando Larry Niemotka has kept in good physical shape his entire life. The New York native joined the Air Force at 17, was stationed at Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield and never looked back. Even when he needed an ablation for his atrial fibrillation recently, Larry wasn't worried.

But after performing the ablation, Lt. Col. Joseph Sky, M.D., Larry's cardiologist at Travis, told him something more serious was wrong with his heart: aortic stenosis.

"My mindset has always been to stay in shape—ready to jump out of an airplane at any time—so I was surprised to learn I had a problem with my aortic valve," Larry says. "I was concerned that might mean I'd have to have my chest cracked open."

Dr. Sky believed he might be a candidate for something less invasive: transaortic valve replacement, or TAVR, which uses a catheter to insert a replacement valve. Larry selected a referral to Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento (SMCS) so that he could be near one of his daughters in Folsom.

"I clicked immediately with Dr. Roberts—he's a native New Yorker like me," Larry says. "And through his professionalism and our immediate rapport, I knew I was in good hands."

What Larry didn't know at the time was that David K. Roberts, M.D., FACC, FSCAI, is chair of the cardiovascular department for Sutter Medical Group and responsible for bringing the TAVR procedure to Sutter Health's Valley region in 2012. Larry would be his 2,000th case.

"Despite having severe aortic stenosis, Larry was an excellent candidate for TAVR because he was in such good shape physically," Dr. Roberts says. "Left untreated, the failure of his valve would have been fatal."

After just one night in the hospital, Larry was discharged to his daughter's house to recuperate. And before long, he had resumed walking six days a week and was eager to get back on his NordicTrack.

### The Evolution of TAVR

According to Dr. Roberts, TAVR has revolutionized the treatment of aortic stenosis. It vastly minimizes the recovery from aortic valve replacement, enabling just an overnight hospital stay for standard-risk patients. TAVR also allows high-risk patients who aren't candidates for open-heart surgery to receive aortic valve replacement, such as the two 100-year-old patients whom Dr. Roberts has treated.

He and the cardiology team at SMCS were tapped to begin TAVR 12 years ago because of their high procedural volume of heart surgeries and excellent outcomes. At first they'd perform about one TAVR procedure a week. Today, Dr. Roberts, his partner, Pei-Hsui Huang, M.D., FACC, and colleagues perform up to nine procedures weekly.

TAVR has progressed exponentially over the last decade due to tremendous advancements in the equipment. "Think about how big those first cellphones were in the 1990s," Dr. Roberts says. "We started with the medical equivalent of that back then."

As Dr. Roberts explains, the first valve replacements involved very large catheters that were too big to pass through the legs in many patients. "So in one-third of the cases, we had to go through the chest and tip of the heart," he says. "That is no longer necessary because now a much smaller catheter can deliver valves through a small hole in the leg in the vast majority of patients."

Additionally, catheter-based valve replacement has evolved to be used in all four valves of the heart.

### Quality Enables Major Milestone

Though TAVR technology has changed, the exceptional quality of cardiological care at SMCS hasn't wavered. Since the beginning, the program has maintained three-star ratings from the American College of Cardiology and the Society of Thoracic Surgeons.

Additionally, Larry's case launched SMCS into an elite group: It is now one of only 25 programs nationwide to have performed more than 2,000 TAVR procedures.

"The underlying message of this milestone is that it puts SMCS at the cutting edge of this work," Dr. Roberts says. "Important leaders in the cardiovascular industry come to us when they have something new or a major breakthrough."

Larry is certainly grateful for SMCS's expertise and top-tier care. "I could not have been more pleased with the experience—absolutely golden, fantastic," he says. "The entire team was so professional, really putting me at ease and making me value the services at Sutter. It's great to be alive."

If you are interested in supporting cardiovascular care at SMCS, please contact Bryan Belden at [bryan.belden@sutterhealth.org](mailto:bryan.belden@sutterhealth.org).

## TAVR Across Sutter

In addition to Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento (SMCS), four other Sutter hospitals offer transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR): Alta Bates Summit Medical Center (ABSMC) in Oakland, California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco, Mills-Peninsula Medical Center in Burlingame and Sutter Memorial Medical Center in Modesto.

The TAVR programs at both SMCS and ABSMC maintain a three-star rating from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, the highest possible rating, awarded to just a small percentage of hospitals nationally. Also, the first commercial transcatheter tricuspid valve repair in the Bay Area using TriClip was performed at Sutter in June (see page 4). Now transcatheter procedures can be used to replace all four heart valves: tricuspid, pulmonary, mitral and aortic.

SMCS  
is one of only  
**25**  
programs in the  
U.S. to exceed  
**2,000**  
TAVR procedures.



Paul Kitagaki Photography

# Advancing Interventional Cardiology

Over the past decade, the emergence of minimally invasive procedures to replace compromised heart valves has transformed cardiovascular medicine. A prime example is transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) to treat aortic valve disease.

Through a small incision in the leg or wrist or under the collarbone, TAVR deploys a new valve inside the existing one without needing to open a patient's chest surgically. A shorter hospital stay and a smoother recovery result in significantly improved patient outcomes.

Sutter Health has been at the forefront of the cardiological revolution, with two of the nation's top interventional cardiologists—David Daniels, M.D., at California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) and David K. Roberts, M.D., FACC, FSCAI, at

Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento (SMCS)—pushing the paradigm shift. Both contribute extensive experience, plus a research background, innovative mindset and collaborative spirit to Sutter Health.

Since Dr. Roberts brought TAVR to the Valley and Dr. Daniels brought it to the Bay Area, more than 3,000 TAVR procedures have been performed across Sutter Health. This achievement makes Sutter, which handles some of the most complex medical cases in Northern California, a nationally recognized leader in this field.

Beyond TAVR, Sutter cardiologists frequently test out and implement new cardiological innovations. They also conduct numerous clinical trials in partnership with the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other top physicians in the country.

"We just finished a study of transcatheter mitral valve replacement that involves me as one of the principal investigators," Dr. Daniels says. "It occurred at 80 sites globally, and we had one of the highest trial enrollment volumes here at CPMC. This technique will be the first of its kind approved in the U.S."

## The Next Frontier of TAVR

TAVR has evolved considerably over the last 12 years, and today's technology is remarkable by historical standards (see page 12). Still, the procedure isn't perfect, and Dr. Daniels sees an associated public health crisis on the horizon, one that keeps his innovative mind up at night trying to solve.

"The replacement valves can fail eventually if the leaflets of the patient's compromised valve acutely obstruct coronary arteries that supply blood to the heart," he explains. "When this happens, approximately 25% of those valves won't be able to be replaced without a special procedure to remove the leaflets."

Currently, no such procedure or tool exists—and that's what Dr. Daniels is working to change.

"With roughly 180,000 TAVR procedures performed in the U.S. every year, that's a large number of patients we need to start innovating for," he says. For now, in the absence of an evidence-backed, FDA-approved solution, Dr. Daniels and the Sutter surgical teams use investigational techniques to save lives.

"This looming crisis must be solved through research and technology—and here at Sutter, we've begun solving the problem," Dr. Daniels says. "We were among the first innovators in the world to split the leaflets in half through a procedure called BASILICA. But this will be a public health crisis down the road that must be solved through research and technology—and here at Sutter, we've begun solving the problem."

## Philanthropy Drives Innovation

Working in Northern California, a hotbed of technological innovation, is advantageous for Sutter cardiologists, and Dr. Daniels hopes the proximity can propel a breakthrough for TAVR. There are currently a few companies working on the issue, with Dr. Daniels and colleagues providing guidance.

However, development of groundbreaking solutions is persistently hindered by insufficient funding—and that's why philanthropy is so critical.

"With the right kind of funding, we could take a completely novel approach," Dr. Daniels says. "We could ask, 'what devices may be commercially approved but not necessarily used in the way we need?' Then if we can demonstrate that using such equipment in a new way improves patient health and overall health, we could push that solution forward."

Currently, philanthropic contributions are enabling Dr. Daniels to perform a novel transcatheter mitral valve replacement procedure in compassionate-use scenarios for patients who don't meet the criteria for an ongoing clinical trial. "These are patients who have no other options," he explains. "If they're willing—and they usually are—we'll apply to the FDA to treat that one patient with the device being evaluated in the trial."

Still, several other immediate cardiological issues could be addressed with the help of philanthropic donors.

"Many cutting-edge tools, programs and research are very expensive even to pilot," Dr. Roberts says. "Partnering with donors opens a world of possibilities. For example, philanthropy might one day help us create 3D reconstructions of the heart, enabling us to determine the right size of the valves before starting a TAVR procedure."

Whether testing out cutting-edge technologies or innovating new solutions for complex medical cases, Sutter cardiologists value the collaborative environment fostered by a strong, unified healthcare network.

"We have excellent opportunities to work together, help each other and learn from each other," Dr. Roberts says. "Each of us has strengths, so we can really complement each other in different areas. We collaborate to share best practices and eliminate inefficient operational variances. Together, we can continue to improve and make an even greater impact on the health of our communities."

If you are interested in supporting cardiology innovations, contact Jordan Brozell at [jordan.brozell@sutterhealth.org](mailto:jordan.brozell@sutterhealth.org).



David Daniels, M.D., is energized by donor partnerships in cardiology.

Paul Kitagaki Photography



“We want to find partners conducting meaningful work that shows impact over time.”

—PING CHAO

## BUSINESS MINDS, GIVING HEARTS

Sitting down to speak with Ping and Amy Chao about their eponymous family foundation, you hear two slightly different versions of how their philanthropic legacy began. Both agree that when Ping retired in 2005 from a successful career in the electronic design automation (EDA) industry, his entrepreneurial spirit influenced what came next. But they disagree on how they selected their first grantee.

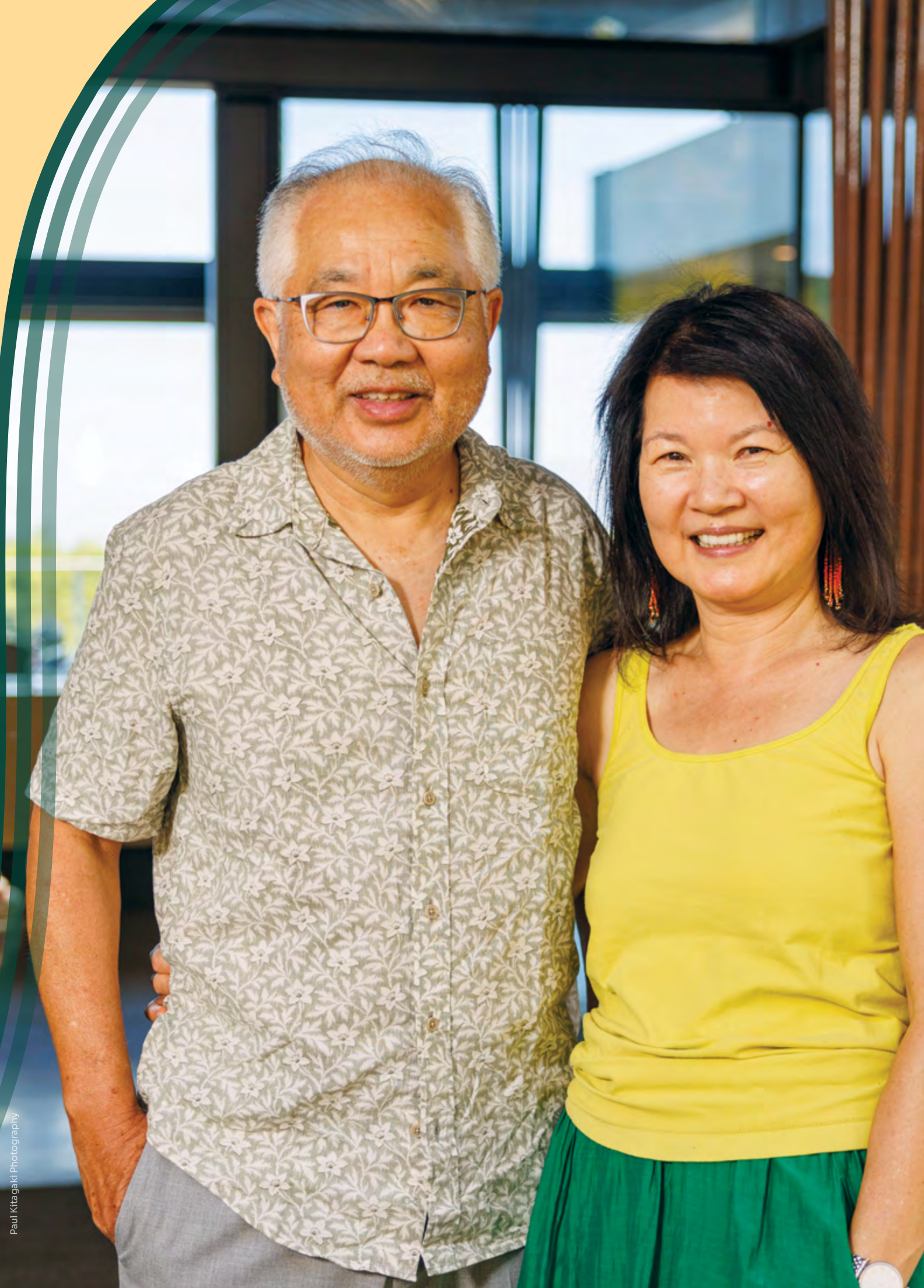
Ping says it was a “random encounter” that led them to start Little Red Scarf, a program that funds surgeries for children with congenital heart disease living in the poor, rural Gansu province in Northwest China, near Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia.

Amy sees it differently. “He says our philanthropy is by chance, but it is our calling,” she explains. “When Ping retired, I prayed that, together, we could do something meaningful. One day at our church we heard a mom’s story about the suffering of thousands of children in this one remote province in China.”

Amy knew right then that they’d found their first project and philanthropic focus: healthcare and educational opportunities for people in disadvantaged regions of the world. Although the mom from church had lost her child despite coming to the U.S. for surgery, her pleas for funding to help other families like hers were now being answered.

Two short weeks later, Ping and Amy travelled to Gansu. There, they began laying the groundwork for a successful partnership with three regional hospitals in Lanzhou to cover the entire cost of surgeries for underserved sick children.

Paul Kitagaki Photography





Ping and Amy Chao celebrate another successful surgery through their Little Red Scarf program.

On that first trip, Amy saw a 5-year-old child who had congenital heart disease. “She looked so frail because her family could not afford the surgery and had waited too long,” she says. “These children look purple because their circulation and cardiac function is so poor. Amazingly, right after surgery, they are back to a healthy pink—even that 5-year-old.”

Fifteen years later, the Ping and Amy Chao Family Foundation has helped 1,700 children receive surgery. Ping says it is very rewarding to see those who had been very sick now thriving, playing and having fun at the program’s annual summer camp for survivors.

But the Chaos’ impact doesn’t stop there. Along with training local physicians and building the Lanzhou hospital into a center of excellence for congenital heart disease, the foundation’s partnership with academia and government agencies has enhanced social welfare programs and farmers’ insurance for the children’s low-income rural families, which covers up to 80% of the cost.

This extended benefit satisfies Ping’s business objectives as well, making him feel comfortable turning the program over to local entities down the road.

### Successful Career Informs Philanthropy

Ping started his first company at 30 years old, in the infancy of EDA, creating design automation tools that became essential for the semiconductor industry. After earning a master’s degree in electrical engineering and computer science from the University of California, Berkeley, he and Amy moved to the heart of Silicon Valley, where he started Cadence Design Systems and two other successful EDA companies.

Ping admits that when they launched the Ping and Amy Chao Family Foundation, philanthropy was foreign to them. But Amy’s decades of community service and volunteering paired with Ping’s high-tech business experience gave them a solid jumping-off spot. Every year since starting Little Red Scarf, Ping and Amy have tried to find 10 to 15 philanthropic projects that they can stick with for at least 10 years.

“We don’t give money and walk away,” Ping says. “We want to find partners conducting meaningful work that shows impact over time. I want a \$1 investment to have a \$10 impact.”

Another pivotal project is their foundation’s partnership with the Stanford Asian Liver Center. The center’s founding doctor, Samuel So, M.D., wanted to vaccinate 500,000 children in the Qinghai province of China against hepatitis B, the leading cause of liver cancer worldwide.

The group successfully completed those vaccinations by 2008. Since then, Dr. So has continued working with academia and the Chinese government, resulting in a new government policy to provide hepatitis B vaccinations nationwide.

### Making an Impact Locally

After partnering on projects in Nepal, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, China and Vietnam, the Chaos are now focused on making an impact closer to home. Recently, Ping and Amy contributed a \$2 million gift to the Sutter Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) infusion center expansion at the Michael and Judith Gaulke Center in Palo Alto.

“We have both received excellent care from PAMF physicians, so I asked my son, who is also a PAMF doctor, how we could show our appreciation,” Amy explains. “After methodically evaluating different philanthropic priorities at PAMF, we chose to support this project to help more patients receive infusion services close to home.”

Considering the family’s positive experiences with PAMF, plus the organization’s reputation for caring for our local communities, “it made good business sense for our foundation to become a philanthropic partner,” Ping adds.

The Chaos also want to promote a spirit of philanthropy and raise awareness of nonprofit and service opportunities for Asian Americans. Transparent Fish Fund, launched in Palo Alto in 2011 by the couple’s close friends, is a strategic partner to their family foundation. Jointly, the two teams have gathered resources and expertise from their community of first-generation Asian immigrants and friends to systematically select and fund meaningful philanthropic opportunities.

“Together, we can make a greater impact than if we stand alone,” Ping concludes.

If you are interested in supporting cancer care excellence at PAMF, contact Joni Block at [joni.block@sutterhealth.org](mailto:joni.block@sutterhealth.org).

49%↑  
annual cancer cases

## PAMF Infusion Center Expansion Enhances Healing

The number of cancer cases in the U.S. will increase 49% by 2050, with the largest jump among adults aged 75 and older. At Sutter Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF), patient demand for infusion treatments is expected to climb 13% per year.

31%↑  
PAMF patient treatments

The \$5.8 million infusion center expansion at PAMF’s Palo Alto campus will enable an estimated 31% more patient visits, cutting wait times in half. Additional infusion chairs and a redesigned space will create a more spacious, soothing environment for patients.

# PRECISION CANCER TREATMENTS OPEN NEW DOORS

**P**hysicians are trained to use probable scenarios to guide their diagnoses. The familiar expression is “When you hear hoofbeats, look for horses, not zebras.” In other words, when diagnosing patients, physicians should consider the most common conditions (horses) first before jumping to rare illnesses (zebras).

Well, given his unique, highly improbable disease history, Dave Amaral, 77, of San Mateo considers himself an albino zebra.

Dave’s story starts with a prostate cancer diagnosis in 2021. He underwent chemotherapy and radiation, and his post-treatment scans were looking good.

“Dave had high PSA levels initially, which is what we expect to see when we start treating prostate cancer,” explains Al Taira, M.D., a radiation oncologist at the Dorothy E. Schneider Cancer Center at Sutter Mills-Peninsula Medical Center. “In response to his treatment, his PSA dropped to expected levels for successful treatment.”

Low PSA levels are the gold-standard indication of disease remission. Yet despite Dave’s levels remaining low, his disease began to progress. “Sometimes prostate cancer does this, but his cancer lacked the features that typically cause progression,” Dr. Taira says.

Drug therapy was controlling most of Dave’s disease, but there was progression in a few locations. In the past, any progression would’ve required a change in drug therapy, Dr. Taira says, even though Dave was tolerating his current treatment well.

**“I wish I could win the lottery and buy Dr. Taira any equipment he needs.”**

—DAVE AMARAL





Al Taira, M.D., and Dave Amaral discuss the donor-funded Encompass mask system for precision radiation.

But thanks to the latest advancements in precision radiation, that's not the case anymore. "These days, instead of changing drug therapy at the first sign of disease progression, we frequently target the drug-resistant sites with focal, high-dose radiation," Dr. Taira explains.

In fact, new technology at Sutter Mills-Peninsula Medical Center can deliver radiation so precisely that if tumors recur, patients can be treated safely multiple times over the course of years. "Generally, these precise treatments also have very limited side effects while keeping disease under control, with good quality of life," Dr. Taira says. "We are happy this is the result we've seen with Dave."

### Familiarity Ensures Accurate Diagnosis

Dave had been feeling relatively healthy, but then in December 2023, he thought he was having a stroke. Suddenly unable to walk and feeling a funny twitching in his head, he went to the emergency department.

Doctors found that the prostate cancer had traveled to his brain, which could've easily been misdiagnosed. But because Dave had been receiving care at Mills-Peninsula's cancer center for several years, his care team understood his unusual disease pattern and knew to consider the unexpected.

"It is rare for prostate cancer to metastasize to the brain, but our familiarity with Dave helped us pinpoint the problem," Dr. Taira says. "Fortunately, he was able to receive highly accurate radiation treatment with the latest technology."

For the first radiation treatments on his brain, Dave wore a restrictive, closed facemask. That's typical for head and neck radiation, but the mask made him feel very claustrophobic. Plus, being bolted down to the table with his eyes covered caused anxiety and vertigo. His care team cut eye holes in the mask, which helped somewhat.

After the treatment, "I asked Dr. Taira if he had ever worn the mask to experience what patients go through," Dave says. "To his credit, he had."

Thankfully, Dave didn't need to wear the restrictive mask again. His subsequent treatments followed a new approach funded in part by generous community donors, including Dave. The Encompass system uses an open facemask with infrared surface guidance that delivers radiation within a millimeter of the target.

Dave has now completed eight radiation courses, bringing his total radiation treatments to 60, plus 14 rounds of chemotherapy. "I'm told I'm in the top five patients at Mills-Peninsula for number of radiation treatments," Dave says. "And while I don't want to be number one in that department, I'm happy to be feeling pretty good now."

Though he knows that new disease symptoms may arise moving forward, Dave is confident that precision treatments are helping him live his best life.

### From Zebra to Albino Zebra

Dave coined his albino zebra nickname not solely because of his cancer. "It seems like if there is a remote possibility to suffer from something, it will happen to me," he says.

For example, Dave is having issues with his jawbone, a rare side effect of one of his prostate cancer medications. He is also showing signs of narrow-angle glaucoma, a condition that restricts the normal drainage of fluid from the eye. The resulting buildup can cause high intraocular pressure, intense pain and even sudden blindness. Laser treatments can poke holes and drain the fluid, which Dave decided to do immediately given his medical history.

Dr. Taira acknowledges that Dave's journey with cancer and other ailments is very unusual, perhaps warranting his nickname. However, he sees advanced treatment modalities as a silver lining in Dave's story.



"Our focal point with radiation is to control disease, without having to go to more extreme chemotherapies," Dr. Taira says. "One of the most positive advancements is that, even with so many tumors and metastatic cancer, Dave has tolerated the treatments and is not worn down physically. Dave has had a great response to treatment, unburdened by side effects, so he can get back to enjoying his life."

During his career, Dr. Taira has seen HIV and AIDS change from a death sentence to a chronic disease, and he foresees metastatic cancer moving in the same direction. Today's highly precise tools—which enable fewer, more precise treatments, leading to fewer side effects and better outcomes for patients—could help turn metastatic cancers into chronic diseases that can be managed.

### Giving to Honor Exceptional Care

A seventh-generation Californian born and raised in Los Altos, Dave takes his health challenges in stride. He enjoys baking and has won many baking awards at the California State Fair in Sacramento. He often brings his famous cookies and confections to the cancer center to share with his care team, even taking requests.

"Just before treatments for my brain tumor, I had the staff vote on their confection of choice," Dave says. "Five-spice cashew brittle and cinnamon jumbles prevailed. I like to keep my care team happy to see me."

Prior to his cancer experience, Dave and Carolyn, his late wife of nearly 50 years, had plenty of interaction with care teams at Sutter Mills-Peninsula. Carolyn suffered a broken hip and other health challenges before succumbing to dementia and Alzheimer's disease in August 2021.

Dave and Carolyn's commitment to supporting their local community ran deep. Longtime volunteers at the Samaritan House in San Mateo, St. Vincent de Paul and the Kiwanis Club, they were devoted to helping less fortunate community members.

"The care that Carolyn and I have received has always been good, and now I can afford to give a little bit more to show my gratitude," Dave says. "I've given philanthropic gifts to support the catheterization lab, mobile stroke unit and now cancer care at Mills-Peninsula. I wish I could win the lottery and buy Dr. Taira any equipment he needs."

If you are interested in supporting cancer care excellence at Mills-Peninsula, contact Amanda Kiernan Martin at [amanda.martin5@sutterhealth.org](mailto:amanda.martin5@sutterhealth.org).



Dave Amaral shows off his baking awards.

After losing his wife to breast cancer, donor Peter Read has helped expand breast care access across the East Bay by founding the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Center and Program.



Jocelyn Knight Photography

# BUILDING A SYMPHONY OF CARE

**D**iagnosed with breast cancer in October 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, East Bay resident Marlene began her care with Sutter Health virtually. The warmth and compassion she received from her care team online continued in-person at the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Center (CARBHC) at Sutter Alta Bates Summit Medical Center (ABSMC) in Oakland. Seeing the smiling face of CARBHC co-director and surgeon Rita Kwan-Feinberg, M.D., MPH, FACS, just before her procedure brought Marlene comfort.

"Dr. Kwan-Feinberg's warmth and confidence made me happy that I was her patient for my first-ever surgery," says Marlene, a retired business professional. "I also noticed that everyone on her surgical team was delighted to work with her. That's what you want in a care team."

In her initial virtual appointment, Marlene was also introduced to CARBHC oncologist Xin Li, M.D., Ph.D., and radiologist Sophia Rahman, M.D. The care team thoughtfully answered all of her questions and continued to provide collaborative support throughout her cancer journey. In addition, Sutter provided a nurse navigator, who was available by email to answer all medical questions pre- and post-surgery.

"I am so pleased with my care that I tell anyone who will listen about how talented, intelligent and quality focused the doctors and staff are at Sutter," Marlene wrote in a letter to Warner Thomas, Sutter Health president and CEO. "Dr. Kwan-Feinberg is modest about her own talents while striving to deliver the best medical care and leading a diverse team to do the same."

Marlene was so touched by her experience and successful treatment that she made a generous gift to the broader Carol Ann Read Breast Health Program (CARBHP) in honor of Dr. Kwan-Feinberg. "I am thrilled to start my giving to support genetic counseling for breast cancer patients who can't afford it or who lack insurance," Marlene says. "I want to ensure that more patients can have this critical information to make the best medical choices."

## CAROL ANN READ BREAST HEALTH PROGRAM

5

East Bay locations

420,000

patients screened since 2012

4,838

patients diagnosed and treated for breast cancer since 2012

2,000

mobile mammogram screenings since 2020

97

screening events scheduled in 2024



CARBHP oncologist Benjamin Raber, M.D., Peter Read, radiologist Linda Gordon, M.D., surgeon Rita Kwan-Feinberg, M.D., MPH, FACS.

Jocelyn Knight Photography

“After losing so many people in my life to cancer, I want to help as many more as I can.”

—PETER READ

### Giving Heals

Stories like Marlene’s are music to the ears of longtime philanthropist Peter Read, whose generosity inspired the creation of the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Center at ABSMC back in 2008.

He sold a valuable car to fund that first gift, solidifying his ongoing belief that “giving is much better than receiving.”

Over the years, his commitment to providing the best diagnostics and wraparound care has been a salve for Peter, who endured the painful loss of his first wife, Carol, to breast cancer nearly 30 years ago. Through his continued partnership, the single-site center expanded into the more comprehensive CARBHP in 2016. There are now five locations across the East Bay: ABSMC in Oakland and Berkeley, Alta Bates Summit Women’s Health Center in Lafayette, Eden Medical Center in Castro Valley and Sutter Delta Medical Center in Antioch. His philanthropic support has also helped the program acquire the best imaging tools and enhance breast cancer screening, treatment and navigation services.

Peter’s generosity even brought a mobile mammography van to the area to offer more East Bay women convenient access to screening services. Launched in 2020, the van has almost 100 screening events scheduled for 2024 and is expected reach more than 1,700 women by year’s end.

Peter’s efforts energize him—and he’s not done making an impact yet.

“If we’ve helped save 4,800 lives since 2012, then I want to figure out how to save twice that,” he says. “Helping others becomes addictive—it feels like Christmas to me. I think of what we’ve done so far as creating a nice band, but now I want to build a symphony of care to reach many more people.”

### The Next Chapter

As a former co-owner of Grocery Outlet, Peter helped expand the company from two East Bay stores to hundreds of supermarkets across the U.S. Throughout his busy retail career and well into retirement, he has remained physically active. But turning 82 this year, he admits that he’s slowing down.

“The race cars are gone, and I can’t play tennis or ski anymore, as I’ve had some health issues catch up with me the last several years,” Peter says.

But his Pekingese puppy, Leo, keeps him busy, as do his grandchildren. He attends all of their sporting activities and even serves as referee during play at home. “I hobble around, but I am blessed to serve as both grandpa and grandma,” Peter says. “At my age, I’m much more appreciative of what medicine can do for us.”

Channeling his retailer roots, Peter regularly sends people to CARBHP sites to experience the warm and welcoming environment. “It makes me happy to hear compliments from my ‘secret shoppers’ about their positive experiences,” he says. “After losing so many people in my life to cancer, I want to help as many more as I can.”

His message will be shared widely at the East Bay philanthropy team’s inaugural Women’s Wisdom & Wellness Luncheon on October 25.

“Not only will we honor Peter at our Women’s Wisdom & Wellness Luncheon, but all of the proceeds will support the Carol Ann Read Breast Health Program, expanding access to compassionate care,” says Maureen Smith, senior director of philanthropy for Sutter East Bay.

To attend the luncheon or join Peter in enhancing breast care in the East Bay, please email [maureen.smith@sutterhealth.org](mailto:maureen.smith@sutterhealth.org).

SUTTER HEALTH  
East Bay Philanthropy

Women’s Wisdom & Wellness Luncheon with Rita Moreno

OCTOBER 25, 2024

Claremont Hotel Club & Spa  
41 Tunnel Road, Berkeley, CA

11:30am - 2:30pm



The family of Joyce Raley Teel (center) made a gift to Sutter Center for Psychiatry to honor their late mother.

# Transformative Gift Advances Mental Healthcare

James Weaver grappled with depression and anxiety stemming from multiple traumas in his life and career. Traditional psychiatric therapies weren't working, so he turned to Sutter Center for Psychiatry (SCP) in Sacramento for advanced treatment.

The region's premier psychiatric hospital and outpatient center had the right therapy for him: transcranial magnetic stimulation, or TMS.

A noninvasive intervention for people dealing with major depression or bipolar disorder who haven't responded to medications or psychotherapy, TMS uses magnetic waves to target brain areas involved in mood regulation. Patients remain awake throughout each session, resulting in minimal side effects.

James's two-month TMS treatment worked. "I was hoping for anything that they could do for me," he says. "What I got was way beyond that."

SCP is the only facility in the Sacramento region that offers TMS and its sister therapy, electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), for those not responding to traditional treatments. Whereas TMS is noninvasive, ECT administers a controlled electrical stimulus to the brain under anesthesia. It has been shown to alleviate severe depressive symptoms and other acute mental health conditions rapidly, also with minimal side effects.

James says he would highly recommend TMS to anyone in a similar position. His wife, Maria, agrees: "To see that shine come back, and seeing glimpses of who he was and who I know him to be, I can't even describe it."

## Expanding Access

Soon even more patients like James will have access to TMS, ECT and other advanced mental health therapies. As the primary healthcare system providing mental health services in the Greater Sacramento area, Sutter is now creating a first-of-its-kind Behavioral Health Center of Excellence at SCP.

Supported by community donors, the effort will combine inpatient services with an expanded outpatient mental health clinic in a single setting. The cutting-edge center, led by SCP's visionary chief medical executive, Ozra Nobari, M.D., will enhance Sutter's ability to treat a wide range of conditions.

In February, Sutter Health received a groundbreaking gift from the Thomas P. Raley Foundation, providing foundational support for the new Behavioral Health Center of Excellence. The cash donation—the largest Sutter has ever received toward mental healthcare in Sacramento—will enable more patients to receive help for anxiety, depression and other mental health needs.

The Raley Foundation gift will fund two projects. The first will create a multipurpose observation unit to support safe patient discharge after procedures, ensuring timely transitions and close monitoring for all patients in a private, comfortable setting. The second project enables the interventional psychiatry program to expand treatment modalities, including TMS and ECT, and further research on novel therapies.

For example, SCP recently launched an accelerated TMS pilot. Approved by the Food and Drug Administration in 2019, accelerated TMS therapy compresses the traditional six- to eight-week treatment down to one or two weeks, with three to five sessions conducted each day.

"The accelerated program is tailored to patients seeking quick results and those who are not suitable candidates for ECT due to potential anesthesia side effects," Dr. Nobari says.



Maria and James Weaver are thrilled with the life-changing care he received at Sutter Center for Psychiatry.

**“We set out in search of the best organization in the Sacramento area to advance mental healthcare. After meeting with Sutter, our decision was easy.”**

—CLAUDIA TEEL DOERHOFF



Sutter President and CEO Warner Thomas, Viva Ettin, M.D., J.D., Sutter Chief Philanthropy Officer Raya Elias-Petros, Claudia Teel Doerhoff and SCP CEO Dan Peterson celebrate the new philanthropic partnership.



### Continuing a Caring Legacy

The Thomas P. Raley Foundation was established by Joyce Raley Teel and Jim Teel to honor Joyce's father, who founded Raley's Supermarkets in 1935. As the company's second-generation owner, Joyce became a well-known philanthropist in the Sacramento area, devoted to supporting the arts, education, children and healthcare across her community.

Since Joyce's passing in 2022 at age 91, her and Jim's daughters now lead the Raley Foundation, carrying on the tradition of giving from the heart. According to Claudia Teel Doerhoff, foundation chair, the family is proud to honor their mother and her empathy for others, especially those living with anxiety, depression and other mental health challenges.

"We set out in search of the best organization in the Sacramento area to advance mental healthcare," Claudia says. "After meeting with Sutter CEO Warner Thomas and Dr. Nobari and learning of their commitment to breaking the stigma of mental health conditions, our decision was easy. In fact, we increased the size of our gift after visiting the Sutter Center for Psychiatry and seeing how our investment could improve care in our community."

Dr. Nobari hosted several meetings with Claudia, explaining her vision for improving care and expanding access. Several other SCP leaders and dedicated staff also helped explain the long-term goals of SCP, including CEO Dan Peterson; Leilanie Ayala, N.P., director of nursing; Corbin Bosse, R.N., manager of interventional psychiatry; and Hammad Khan, M.D., medical director of interventional psychiatry.

Impressed by the entire team's dedication and ingenuity, the Raley/Teel family decided to bestow Sutter Health with the foundation's largest ever gift to healthcare.

"The Sutter Behavioral Health Center of Excellence will have a broad and enduring impact on the health and well-being of so many individuals and families who are struggling with mental health conditions," Dr. Nobari says. "We are grateful to the Raley/Teel family for their impactful gift."

Along with spurring innovation at Sutter, the family hopes their gift will inspire other community members to join them in supporting behavioral healthcare.

"Helping more people through their mental health challenges is one of the biggest needs of our generation, and Sutter Health has the breadth and expertise to bring about meaningful change," says Raya Elias-Petros, chief philanthropy officer at Sutter Health. "We are deeply honored that donors like Claudia and the Thomas P. Raley Foundation have chosen to partner with us."

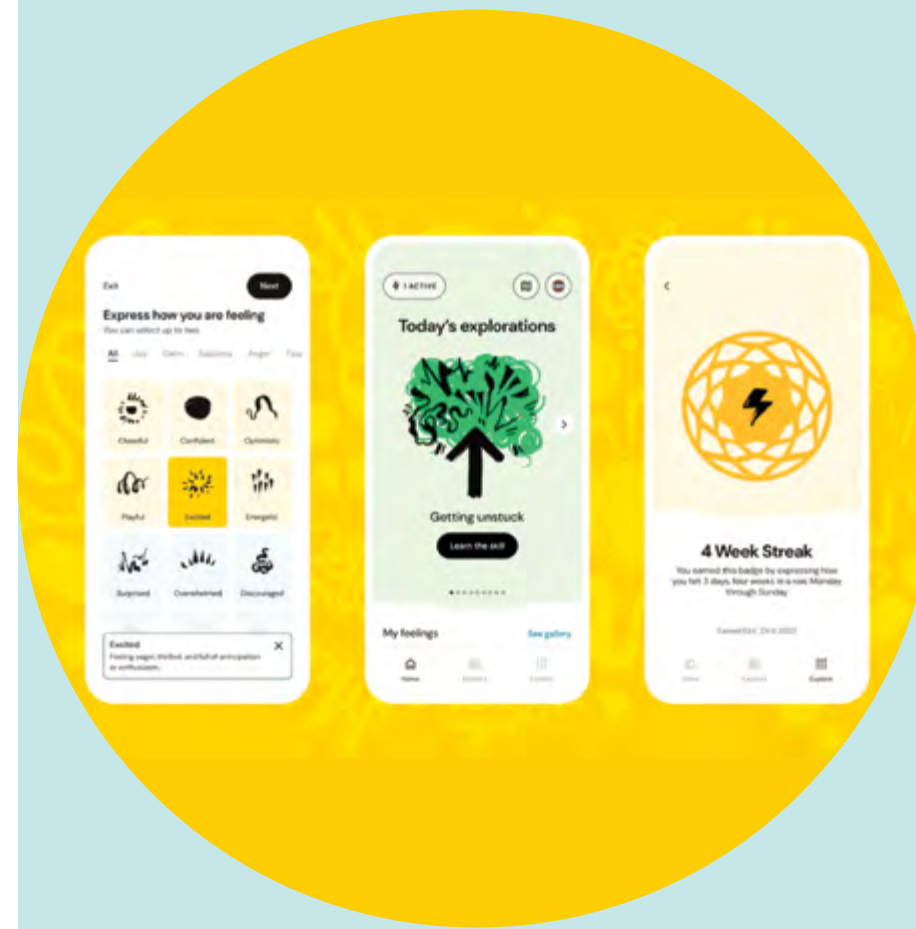
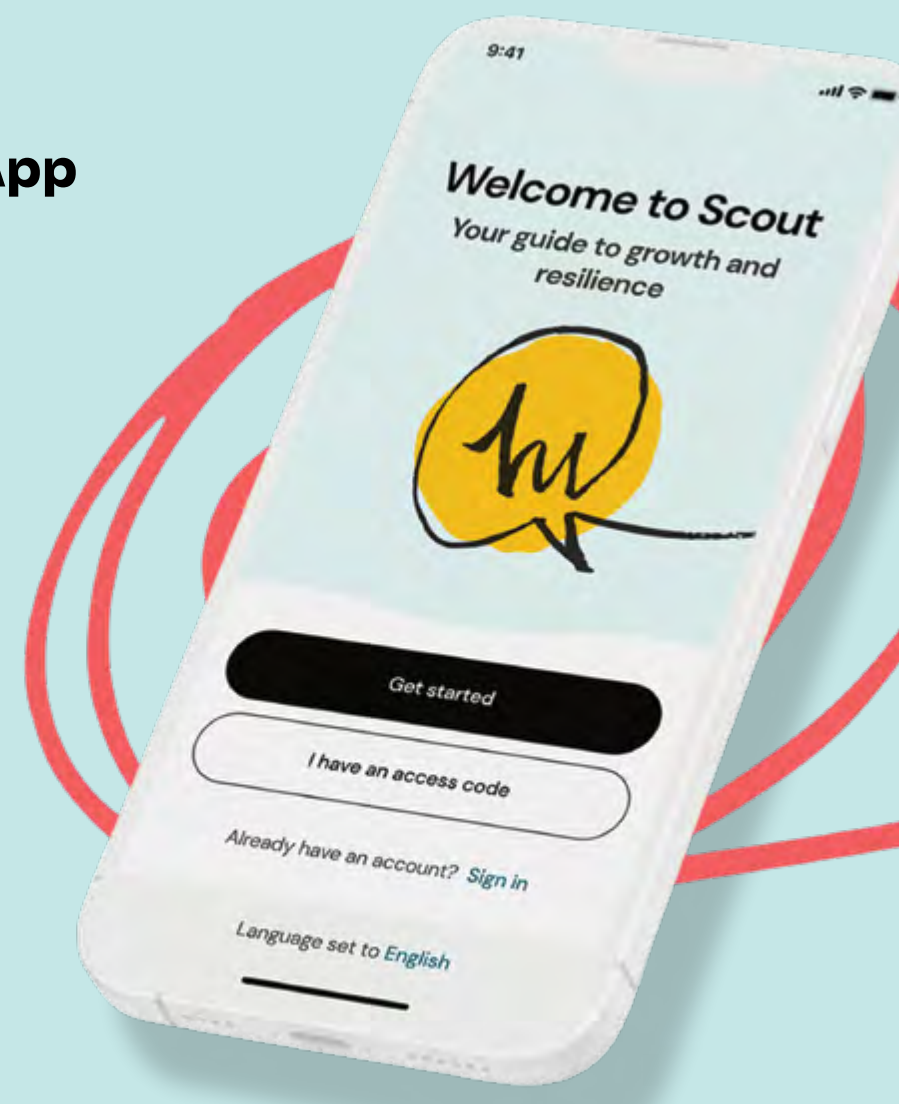
If you are interested in supporting the Sutter Center for Psychiatry contact Antoinette Vojtech at [antoinette.vojtech@sutterhealth.org](mailto:antoinette.vojtech@sutterhealth.org)

Claudia Teel Doerhoff presents her family's gift to Sutter.

## Sutter Mental Wellness App Wins Webby Award

Scout by Sutter Health™, a digital wellness tool for teens and young adults, took top honors in the Best Health, Wellness and Fitness Apps and Software category at the 28th annual Webby Awards. Presented by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences, the prestigious Webby Awards honor excellence on the internet.

"Receiving a Webby Award highlights our commitment to supporting the mental wellness of our teens and young adults," says Chris Waugh, chief innovation officer at Sutter Health. "We've designed Scout not just as a tool but as a companion in the journey toward resilience and better mental health management."

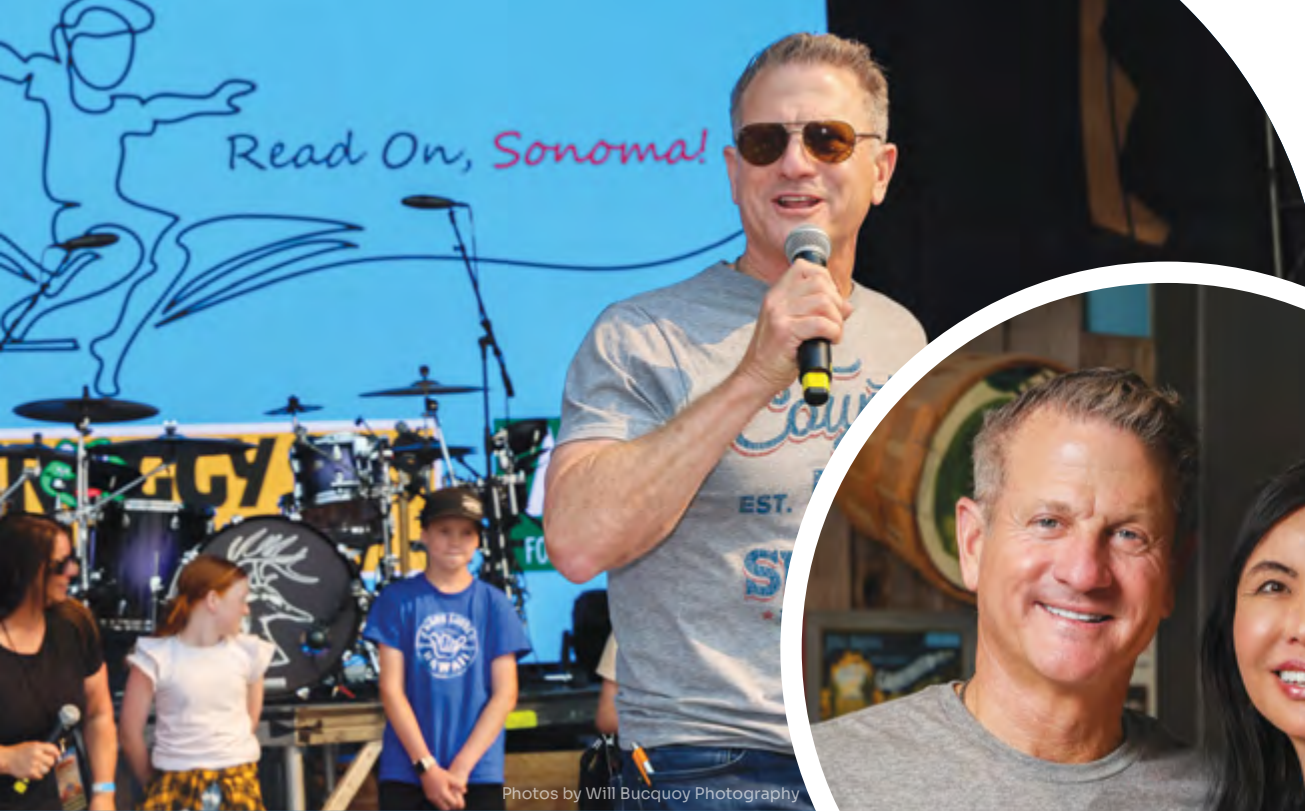


Co-developed with technology-focused creative firm Code and Theory, the Scout platform enhances mental resilience among individuals aged 13 to 22. Available for download in English and Spanish via the App Store or Google Play, Scout's suite of resources aims to enhance understanding and management of emotional health and mental stressors. Features include screenings for anxiety and depression, educational content on various mental health topics and personalized activities to foster emotional growth.

"What sets Scout apart is its educational, nonclinical approach, providing a user-friendly and relatable experience that encourages continuous engagement and application of practical coping skills," says Tam Nguyen, Ph.D., clinical psychologist and director of ambulatory care for behavioral health at Sutter Health.

Since its pilot version launched in 2021, funded in part by philanthropic partners, Scout by Sutter Health has also earned recognition from *Fast Company*, winning a 2021 Innovation by Design award and a 2021 World-Changing Ideas award.





Photos by Will Bucquoy Photography

Philanthropists Susan and Lawrence Amatore focus on children's literacy.



# FOSTERING LITERACY AND BRIGHT FUTURES

Children's earliest experiences greatly impact their long-term development and potential to prosper. Studies show that reading aloud daily to kids under age 5, when the brain develops most rapidly, cultivates communication skills, patience, empathy and vocabulary. These are all cornerstones of school readiness, an important determinate of continued scholastic success.

"Research reveals that children who enter school properly prepared are 10 times more likely to meet third-grade standards and are less likely to drop out of high school," says Marjorie Bohn, D.O., M.S., FAAP, a Sutter Pacific Medical Foundation (SPMF) pediatrician in Santa Rosa.

Reading to young children also fosters future literacy, one of the most essential skills in society. "Literacy provides the foundation for doing well at school, socializing with others, developing independence and succeeding later in life," says Dr. Bohn, a physician champion of children's literacy.

Yet despite the immense value of reading aloud to their kids, only about half of all parents do so daily, according to national surveys, while fewer than 10% start reading to children at infancy. Economically challenged families are significantly less likely to read aloud to kids, but even families with means often struggle to access age-appropriate books.

Believing that every child deserves the best possible start, SPMF launched Reach Out and Read in Sonoma County in 2020, thanks to Sutter physicians and community donors. The next year, Sonoma County residents Susan and Lawrence Amatore made a foundational investment in the program.

A proven intervention endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Reach Out and Read makes early literacy development a standard part of pediatric care. Gifts to the program help purchase new books for care teams to hand out at well-child visits while encouraging families to read together daily.

Since debuting in Sonoma County, Reach Out and Read has been a smashing success. A recent survey of nearly 500 participating families in Santa Rosa found that 85% read together at least five days a week by the time their children are two-and-a-half.

"Through the power of books, we hope this program will assist in pediatric development and building a solid foundation for success," Dr. Bohn says. "We see children's pure joy when receiving what might be the first book they've ever owned."

## Passion Drives Philanthropy

The Amatures have long been passionate about children's literacy, knowing that it's critical to achieving one's full educational, social, career and life potential.

"California has the biggest education budget in the country but the highest level of illiteracy at 23%," Lawrence says, emphasizing why he and Susan have made it a philanthropic priority. "Functional illiteracy is the number-one commonality of people in prison."

Lawrence first learned the value of promoting literacy from his parents, Joe and Wini, who funded the Accelerated Reader program in Broward County, Florida. Accelerated Reader evaluates kids' reading competence through regular testing, helping teachers identify which students may need more help.

Intent on making a difference locally, the Amatures brought that same program to Sonoma County and launched Read On, Sonoma! to enhance literacy at area elementary schools. Celebrity chef Guy Fieri joined their efforts, making the Guy Fieri Foundation an invaluable partner. Next, Susan and Lawrence expanded their generosity to Reach Out and Read.



Philanthropy commissioned a mural by artist Martha Wade to celebrate the Reach Out and Read expansion.

"Reach Out and Read is so wonderful because dedicated Sutter doctors and caregivers expose children and their parents to reading out loud, which may not be happening at home," Lawrence says. "Children can discover the joy of reading long before they start school."

Now the Amatures are challenging their Sonoma County neighbors to help even more children by offering a \$100,000 matching gift. If the fundraising goal is met, the donations can fund Reach Out and Read for at least a decade. The couple's gift will expand the program to five more family practice offices to reach 1,200 more children, enabling it to serve a total of 3,600 children in Sonoma County annually.

This additional investment will also engage children older than 5 by stocking clinics with books for 6- to 10-year-old patients. This will ensure that every Sutter pediatric patient in Sonoma County, newborn to age 10, has access to a book at every well-child visit.

"We are hoping our philanthropy helps children long before they may face other societal problems," Lawrence says. "We might not see the fruits of that philanthropy until the children reach high school, but we are all in."

If you are interested in supporting literacy in Sonoma County contact Lisa Amador at [lisa.amador@sutterhealth.org](mailto:lisa.amador@sutterhealth.org).

## Emphasizing Literacy Across Sutter Health

Six other Sutter organizations have implemented Reach Out and Read:

- Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF)
- Sutter East Bay Medical Foundation
- Sutter Amador Hospital
- Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital
- Sutter Davis Hospital
- Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento

On average, these sites give out hundreds of books in English and Spanish each month. Combined, they distributed approximately 10,000 books to thousands of patient families in 2022 and 2023.

"As many as 40% of our patient families are from low-income households," says Kathrin Sidell, M.D., Ph.D., Reach Out and Read physician champion at PAMF, which offers the program at its Alameda, Santa Cruz and Watsonville care centers. "It makes us proud to know that after five years in the program, every Reach Out and Read child will have a home library full of books."

# Kindness Heals

Imagine living with chronic pain that feels like broken glass sloshing around your abdomen—pain that can escalate at any time, leaving you unable to work, eat, sleep or even leave the house. This level of pain began for Barbara Kivowitz in 2000. While she did find some help along the way, it took 10 years for a doctor to diagnose the cause and another three years for treatment to manage her pain properly.

Barbara Kivowitz and her husband, Richard Weissberg, included the Institute for Health & Healing in their estate plan.

“The compassion, love, heart and healing culture at the Institute for Health & Healing needs to be protected and fostered to ensure its future to help others.”

—BARBARA KIVOWITZ

Up until then, Barbara consulted gynecologists, orthopedists, endocrinologists, osteopaths and many other specialists. Some doctors were dismissive. “I had a neurologist tell me, on his way out of the exam room, that my condition wasn’t neuropathic and they couldn’t help me,” she recalls. Other specialists showed sympathy even though they couldn’t offer solutions.

Eventually, Barbara had a pivotal visit with a rheumatologist, who asked her a series of empathetic questions: *What has pain taken from you? What has pain offered you? What do you still have that hasn’t been impacted by pain?*

“I was deeply moved by the kindness and empathy this doctor showed me with these simple questions,” Barbara shared at a recent Sutter Health patient experience event. “They made me think about my resilience at a time when I was feeling so depleted. This doctor gave me back a stronger sense of self that I had forgotten about.”



Jeff Draisin, M.D.  
Medical Director,  
Institute for Health & Healing

In Barbara's case, pinpointing a diagnosis was complicated, Dr. Draisin notes, as it often is for IHH patients. Because she had multiple concurrent issues, he opted to focus on the process rather than the diagnosis, working closely with Barbara to develop and maintain a balanced treatment protocol that suits her best.

"We do the work together, and Barbara exemplifies the qualities of an engaged and creative explorer in her care," Dr. Draisin explains. "She offers ideas, and experiments with us to find solutions to her concerns. She actually teaches and inspires me, showing me how human ingenuity, courage and other qualities can be called upon to manage uncertainty, adjust to health challenges and transcend the moment."

### An Act of Service

Deeply grateful for IHH, Barbara eagerly volunteers her time and shares her experiences to help others. For the past seven years, she has served CPMC and Sutter as a patient family advisor, helping to give voice to patients as they navigate the care system. She was also asked by William Isenberg, M.D., Sutter vice president and chief medical and quality officer, to join Sutter's Chief of Staff Council to provide a patient's perspective to the leadership team.

For Barbara, giving is an act of service. "Giving to others was part of my life growing up," she explains. "Every day we'd put leftover coins in a charity box, called a tzedakah box in the Jewish tradition. It would go to charity when it was full, and then we would start another box."

Barbara also regularly accompanied her father when he donated blood bimonthly. "Both of these actions reinforced the belief that our highest purpose in life is to be of service and to give what we can," she adds.

Earlier this year, Barbara and her husband, Richard Weissberg, informed the CPMC Foundation that they have included IHH in their estate plan. What started with a series of small gifts in 2021 to honor her IHH care team has led to a substantial legacy gift.

"Barbara has always been so incredibly generous with her time, her intellect, her vulnerability and, importantly, her indomitable spirit," Dr. Isenberg remarks about her gift. "But this—wow! We are so indebted to Barbara for the guidance she has provided us."

Dr. Draisin was also surprised—and extremely grateful—to learn of Barbara and Richard's legacy gift. "Her connection with IHH and our work, and her partnership with us—that is a true gift as well," he says.

Barbara and Richard consider their estate gift an homage to the compassionate whole-person care she has received over the years. "IHH has made our lives and the lives of so many others so much better," Barbara says. "The compassion, love, heart and healing culture of IHH is a treasure that needs to be protected and fostered to ensure its future to help others."

Indeed, their legacy gift will help the program expand for decades. 🌱

At last, Barbara's journey brought her to Sutter's Institute for Health & Healing (IHH) at California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) in San Francisco, a nationally recognized pioneer in integrative health. Founded in 1994, IHH was the first state-certified integrative medicine clinic in California and now has additional sites in Roseville, Sacramento, Santa Rosa and Silicon Valley.

IHH's board-certified, Western-trained doctors also have expertise in integrative practices, enabling them to provide whole-person care with a broad array of healing modalities.

Barbara has now been a patient of IHH integrative medicine physicians Jeff Draisin, M.D., and Judith Jones, M.D., for more than a decade. She credits them and the entire IHH team for helping her keep her chronic pain under control—and for truly caring for and about her.

Barbara especially values the genuine kindness of Drs. Draisin and Jones, which informs their approach to patient care. She feels the same way about everyone at IHH—the doctors, nurses, clinicians, staff and people who answer the phone. Barbara firmly believes that kindness not only creates meaningful connections between patients and care teams—it also helps restore health.

### Relationship-Centered Care

Sutter IHH takes a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach to patient care, combining modern medicine with proven complementary therapies to treat the whole person—body, mind and spirit. Care teams incorporate the latest scientific knowledge and innovations into personalized care plans that empower patients to heal. Therapeutic choices include functional medicine and nutrition interventions, Chinese medicine and acupuncture, integrative psychotherapy, massage and chiropractic care.

Core to IHH's approach is building strong, trusting relationships between practitioners and patients. These bidirectional relationships are "truly the vehicle of care," Dr. Draisin explains, more so than any particular diagnostic workup or treatment, though those are important too. In the relationship framework, he says both parties—practitioner and patient—become both givers and receivers.

**"We do the work together, and Barbara exemplifies the qualities of an engaged and creative explorer in her care."**

—JEFF DRAISIN, M.D.



## The Power of Planned Giving

Including any Sutter Health hospital, foundation or organization in your estate plan will make a real difference in the community and may even inspire others to give. Planned gifts help our philanthropy teams plan more effectively, knowing funds will be in place long-term. Ways to continue your generosity beyond your lifetime include:

### Percentage giving

Through your will, designate percentages of your total estate as you see fit, such as 5% to a Sutter hospital and 95% to loved ones.

### Blended giving

Give an outright gift of cash or other assets today, plus a future gift through your will.

### Beneficiary designation

Name a Sutter organization as a beneficiary of your retirement plan assets, unneeded life insurance policy or donor-advised fund.

### Honoring someone special

Make a gift in honor of an important person in your life to keep their memory alive while helping a shared cause.

For more information on planned giving options, please contact Peter Gielniak at [peter.gielniak@sutterhealth.org](mailto:peter.gielniak@sutterhealth.org) or Becky Thompson at [rebecca.thompson2@sutterhealth.org](mailto:rebecca.thompson2@sutterhealth.org).



Natalie Kim Photography

# HELPING KIDS REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

**B**oth born at Sutter California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) and living in San Francisco for most of their lives, Allison and Jesse Eisenhardt have a deep connection to the hospital. Their son, Alex, was also born here.

A lawyer by profession, Allison joined the CPMC Foundation Board of Trustees in 2014 at the suggestion of her father-in-law, Roy Eisenhardt, who also served on the CPMC Foundation and Sutter Health boards for decades. She also chairs the hospital's Women's and Children's Health Leadership Council.

By volunteering with CPMC and other local nonprofits, Allison says she feels more connected to San Francisco, giving her a sense of grounding and active participation. She has also seen how philanthropy can enhance the world-class care provided at CPMC and make it more accessible to all.

"As a board member, I've learned that so many services that are critical for patients to fully recover are, sadly, not reimbursable to the hospital by insurance," Allison says. "That is where we have focused our philanthropy. From CPMC's Notkin Family Breast Cancer Recovery Program to the hospital's child development services, we know this care impacts overall health."

Child development is an especially important priority for Allison and Jesse. Through community connections, they have seen firsthand the desperate need for the services offered at CPMC's Kalmanovitz Child Development Center (KCDC). As Northern California's largest multidisciplinary evaluation and treatment program for children in need of specialized mental, behavioral and developmental care, KCDC provides about 18,000 visits for infants, children and adolescents each year.

"We've been one degree removed from KCDC services, knowing friends and family who have needed help with infants or school-aged children and have benefitted from this care," Allison shares. "CPMC is a gem of a place, and I've seen what an amazing impact KCDC is making for children and their families."

**“CPMC is a gem of a place, and I've seen what an amazing impact KCDC is making for children and their families.”**

—ALLISON EISENHARDT

## Expanding Access to Child Development Services

For more than 50 years, KCDC has offered leading-edge comprehensive diagnostic and treatment services. But demand for these services has increased dramatically since the pandemic, resulting in a long waitlist for evaluation. Generous community donors have responded, enabling KCDC to increase capacity and reduce the waitlist by more than 400 children. But the goal is to expand access even more.

Moved by the center's work, Allison and Jesse recently gave a significant cash and legacy gift to help KCDC to bring in more child psychology fellows to serve more children.

"I've seen kids' and parents' faces light up when they talk about sessions with Dr. Joe," says Allison, referring to KCDC clinical psychologist Joseph Gumina, Ph.D. "Mental health issues affect all generations, and the earlier we can help children, the better their outcomes will be. We know this gift can make a big difference, and we hope more people will learn the impact of these services throughout the larger Bay Area community."

KCDC is accessible to all families who need care in San Francisco and Marin counties. The center accepts insurance and Medi-Cal while also providing hundreds of scholarships annually thanks to donors like the Eisenhardts.

Still, given the growing need for care, philanthropy is vital to ensuring that families receive the support they need when they need it. Along with expanding its child psychology postdoctoral program, KCDC is increasing clinician recruitment, working to hire more psychologists, speech therapists and occupational therapists to join its network of experts.

"Early intervention is essential to making sure that children experiencing developmental or behavioral health issues can achieve their full potential," says Suzanne Giraud, Ed.D., director of KCDC. "We are so grateful to philanthropic partners like the Eisenhardts, who are helping us care for more people in need."

As Allison and Jesse continue their philanthropic journey, they remain strong advocates for KCDC and the entire hospital.

"CPMC is a community hospital with so many world-class services," Allison says. "While I'm proud to recommend any number of its programs to my friends, I'm also proud that CPMC is part of the wider Sutter system so that others from outside San Francisco can access its wonderful care."

If you are interested in supporting KCDC, contact Anna Schroeder at [anna.schroeder@sutterhealth.org](mailto:anna.schroeder@sutterhealth.org).



KCDC Director  
Suzanne Giraud, Ed.D.



Climbing at KCDC



Allison and Jesse  
Eisenhardt



Fun at KCDC

# YOUR GIFTS IN ACTION

Each year thousands of community donors and corporate and family foundations choose to invest in healthcare excellence across the Sutter Health network. Your generosity, toward both local programs and Sutter-wide efforts, drives us forward and helps us improve healthcare access, equity and outcomes within our communities.

Discover how your gifts and those of your neighbors are impacting care in every region we serve. In the following pages, you will read about myriad programs, projects and upgrades made possible by our generous philanthropic partners. Thank you for helping us advance our mission to ensure that every patient receives the best possible care—because getting better never stops.

## Philanthropy Refreshes CPMC Transplant Housing

On March 11, California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) leaders, trustees, donors, physicians and foundation staff cut the ribbon on the newly renovated housing facility for transplant patients. Located at 2329 Sacramento Street in San Francisco, the apartment building provides a crucial resource for transplant patients who travel long distances to CPMC but can't afford housing during the ensuing weeks when they must stay nearby for monitoring.

Refurbishing and reopening the complex was a key fundraising priority for the CPMC Foundation. More than \$4 million in philanthropic donations and board-approved funds—including a significant gift from the Yvonne and Angelo Sangiacomo Family Foundation for the transplant portion—enabled a full remodel with important upgrades. The 12-unit building has seven dedicated transplant apartments, plus spaces for an onsite caregiver, a spiritual care and chaplaincy team, and visiting medical students from Dartmouth College's Geisel School of Medicine.

Siblings Jim and Mia Sangiacomo, now leading their parents' foundation, were motivated to donate \$1.82 million toward the project in gratitude for the extraordinary care the CPMC transplant team provided their father. Angelo had liver disease and remained under the care of transplant hepatologist Timothy Davern, M.D., until he passed away.

"Dr. Davern is a saint," Jim says. "He has cared for my dad, my mom and our whole family and has probably taken more than 500 calls from us over the years."

The Sangiacomo Foundation's gift completed the CPMC Foundation's \$2.25 million fundraising priority to bring affordable and safe housing for families in need post-transplant.

Another grateful family fulfilled their patriarch's wish to donate new, large televisions for all of the remodeled units. An avid sports fan, Shasta Lake resident Scott Westphal loved watching his favorite teams on the big screen, so he vowed to replace the small, laptop-sized TVs at CPMC's transplant patient housing, where he and wife Leanne stayed for five weeks after his liver transplant in October 2021.

Sadly, Scott died roughly five months after the procedure. Leanne and several friends honored him by carrying out his wish, and the new TVs were installed in 2024.

"Through the incredible generosity of our donors, we can continue to offer our transplant patients a modern, comfortable and affordable home away from home where they can focus on their healing and well-being," says Hamila Kownacki, R.N., CEO of CPMC.

# CALIFORNIA PACIFIC MEDICAL CENTER

## Grants and Disbursements Program Awards \$1.36 Million

Every year since 1999, CPMC's Grants and Disbursements program has awarded funds drawn from unrestricted donor gifts to activate advancements in patient care. This program enables care teams throughout CPMC and Sutter Pacific Medical Foundation to acquire cutting-edge equipment and implement innovative programs that transform lives and lead to healthier communities. In 2023 alone, approved grant requests totaled \$1.36 million.

Recently funded innovations include new diagnostic procedures to detect certain esophageal disorders and monitor treatment response in gastroesophageal reflux disease, along with advanced resuscitation devices for the intensive care unit and emergency department and a new transitional care clinic for advanced organ therapies. In total, the CPMC Grants and Disbursements program has invested nearly \$57 million since its inception.

# 2,200+

Donors helped advance healthcare locally in 2023

# \$36M

Invested across CPMC Foundation and Sutter Pacific Medical Foundation in 2023

## Planned Giving 2023

# \$16M

Requests received to support inpatient and outpatient care

# \$26.3M

Pledged from estate plans to support women's and children's health, cardiovascular services, research, cancer care, transplant services and more, by more than 70 new donors who joined the CPMC Foundation Legacy Society



CPMC opens its newly renovated housing facility for transplant patients.

# SUTTER EAST BAY



## Philanthropy Funds 36 Advancements at ABSMC and SEBMF

Since its 2020 launch, the Sutter East Bay philanthropy team's Grants and Disbursements Program has released more than \$1.54 million to fund innovative new programs and medical technologies across Alta Bates Summit Medical Center (ABSMC) and Sutter East Bay Medical Foundation (SEBMF). For the 2023 cycle, the program received a record number of proposals to enhance patient care and access for inpatient and outpatient programs.

Ultimately, the philanthropy team funded 36 projects in 2023, awarding more than \$670,000 total. Donor gifts designated to greatest need provided \$480,000 of the grant money, while the remaining funds were released from gifts designated to cancer care, cardiovascular services or medical technologies and equipment.

"Because of the generosity of our community, we could increase grant amounts by 25% in 2023, allowing teams to request up to \$25,000 each, representing the second increase in as many years," says Maureen Smith, senior director of philanthropy for Sutter Health East Bay. "It is so inspiring to see the immediate impact donor gifts can make on care." Read about seven of the grant-winning projects on the next page.

### Sutter Scholarship for Success

One of the inaugural programs supported by the East Bay Grants and Disbursements Program, this important health equity scholarship was created in 2021 to encourage students from diverse ethnicities and underprivileged communities to pursue healthcare careers. So far, 13 scholarships, totaling \$32,500, have been awarded to deserving students in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

### Bioness Integrated Therapy System

Used across physical, occupational and speech therapy, this multifunctional, programmable touchscreen device uses games to engage patients and improve visual, language and cognitive skills for better recovery. The 55-inch screen allows patients to perform activities either sitting or standing to suit individual functional levels and treatment goals.

### Integrative Medicine Education Services

Traditional Chinese medicine and integrative medicine modalities help East Bay cancer patients manage severe side effects of chemotherapy and radiation, including pain, nausea, vomiting and anxiety. Unfortunately, these therapies are often under-reimbursed or not covered by insurance, putting them out of many patients' reach. This philanthropic grant will provide education for nursing staff, physicians and newly trained practitioners to serve more cancer patients with acupuncture, acupressure and other alternative therapies.

### MEDRAD Injection System for Liver Delivered Therapy

This state-of-the-art system, first used for heart patients in the catheterization lab, provides high-quality imaging of the liver's vascular structures to deliver more precise cancer treatments, with less damage to healthy tissue, less radiation exposure and shorter procedure times.

### Point-of-Care Ultrasound for Primary and Urgent Care

With a point-of-care ultrasound device that fits in the palm of the hand, primary care and urgent care clinicians can look at a lump, abscess, suspected hernia or foreign object in a patient and perform a diagnostic ultrasound right away instead of sending patients elsewhere. This technology has already saved lives in emergency departments and will now make an impact in five primary care and five urgent care sites across the East Bay.

### Pulse Oximetry Screening for Peripheral Artery Disease

Affecting at least 12 million Americans, peripheral artery disease restricts blood flow to the limbs, putting patients at risk of heart attack, stroke and other serious complications. High-risk patients at the SEBMF Richmond clinic will now receive digital pulse oximetry, a noninvasive screening tool to identify the disease early and implement appropriate cardiovascular management and interventions sooner.

### Volunteer Doula Mentorship Program

Doula support is linked to fewer cesarean deliveries, shorter labors and greater patient satisfaction with the birthing experience. In spring 2022, ABSMC started a volunteer doula program under the guidance of a community doula. Volunteers receive two days of free training and in-person mentorship in exchange for 24 hours of doula shifts monthly. Quarterly training programs will develop a robust group of volunteers to provide consistent support for patients in the labor and delivery unit.



# 900+

Community donors helped advance healthcare locally in 2023

# \$9.2M

Invested across ABSMC and SEBMF in 2023

# \$6.3M

Earmarked for projects beyond 2024

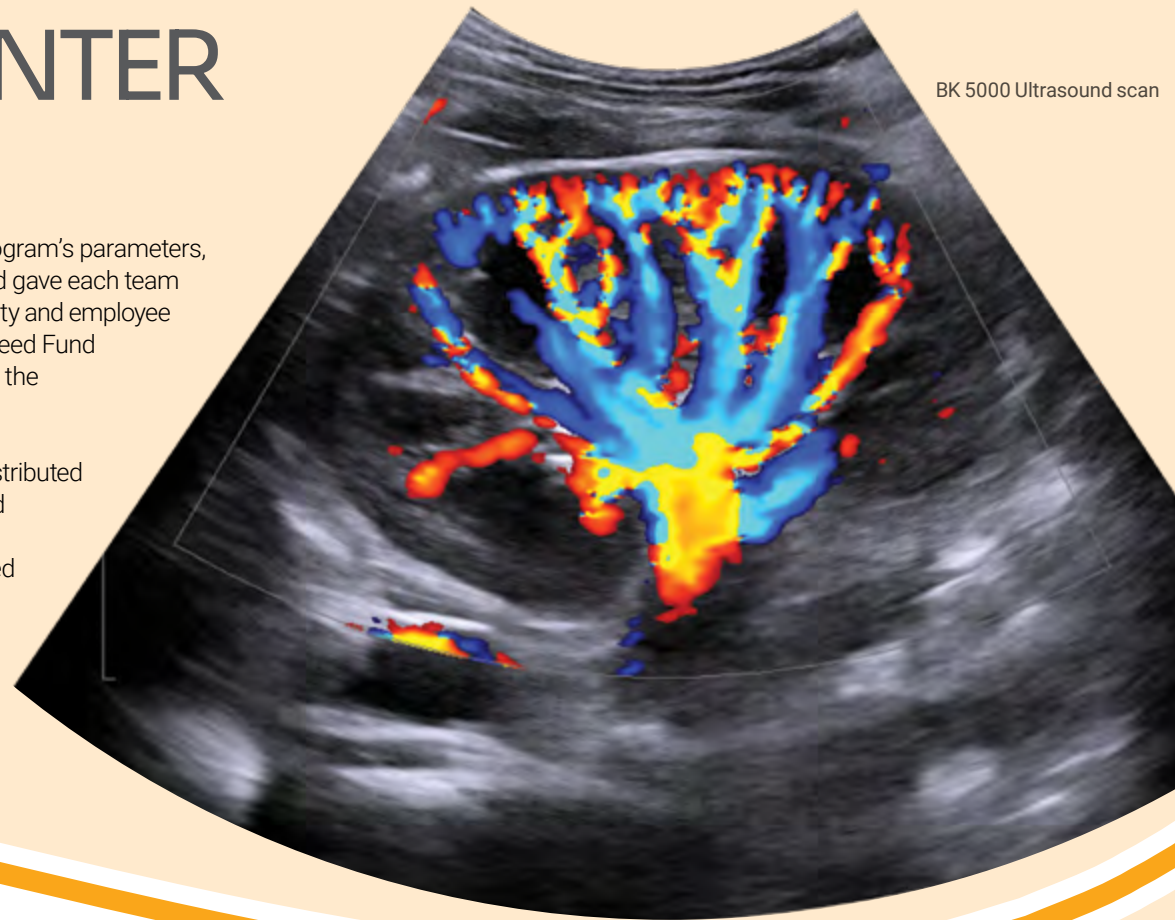
# \$670K

Granted to 36 innovative projects at ABSMC and SEBMF in 2023

# \$10M

Campaign for ABSMC goal, completed in 2024

# MILLS-PENINSULA MEDICAL CENTER



BK 5000 Ultrasound scan

### MPHF Awards Millions for Innovative Programs and Technologies

For its 2023 cycle, Mills-Peninsula Hospital Foundation's (MPHF) Grants and Disbursements Program awarded more than \$2.5 million in donor gifts to support 20 ideas from inpatient and outpatient teams. Showing the power of one system, MPHF invited proposals for ideas from physicians and clinicians who work within Mills-Peninsula Medical Center (MPMC) and at outpatient clinics serving the area.

"Our patients typically don't distinguish whether their outstanding care comes from inpatient or outpatient services, so we asked our foundation to combine its Grants and Disbursements Program this year to include any innovation that would support our community," says Darian Harris, CEO of MPMC.

After receiving 32 requests that fit the program's parameters, the reviewing team narrowed the field and gave each team five minutes to pitch their ideas. Community and employee donations directed to MPHF's Greatest Need Fund provided the foundational money to bring the 20 winning advancements to MPMC.

Over the last decade, this program has distributed nearly \$26 million to foster innovation and ensure patients receive the best possible care. Read about five projects that received funding in 2023 below.

#### Medical Chaplain for Outpatient Palliative Care

Building upon a successful model started at Sutter Palo Alto Medical Foundation in the South Bay and Santa Cruz, a nondenominational chaplain will be hired for MPMC's interdisciplinary outpatient palliative care team, which serves up to 400 patients with life-limiting illness annually.



#### Gray Multiflex Retractor

Used in complex open abdominal, gynecologic and perineal surgeries, this versatile retractor provides maximum flexibility to position across horizontal and vertical planes of the body, helping surgeons to visualize and delicately retract organs to access hard-to-reach tumors for removal. The tool will shorten the duration of major and minor operations.



#### Medtronic Emprint SX Navigation System

This first-of-its-kind technology for Sutter will bring microwave ablation (MWA) to MPMC to treat liver malignancies. MWA allows surgeons to target a specific area of a tumor, gauge wattage and deliver a blast radius much more precisely than previous radio ablation, sparing nearby tissue and organs. This system uses real-time navigation and minimally invasive robotic assistance to reduce complications and improve outcomes.



#### BK 5000 Ultrasound

Used for pancreas, liver and Whipple procedures, this advanced imaging tool allows surgeons to visualize a tumor's location and relationship to other important structures like arteries and veins flowing toward organs. Urology and neurology will also benefit from this ultrasound system.

#### REAL Virtual Reality System

Neurology, orthopedic and vestibular patients with inner ear and balance issues, including concussion, will benefit from this unique 3D virtual reality system, a first for the Bay Area. Therapists control a tablet device and choose programming that provides patients with real-life scenarios to enhance neuroplasticity and facilitate an earlier discharge.



1,600+

Donors helped advance healthcare locally in 2023

\$2.4M

Invested across Mills-Peninsula Medical Center in 2023

\$15M

Earmarked for projects beyond 2024

## 2023 Advancements

Technological and operational upgrades at MPMC increased care access for the community:

52K

Emergency department visits, up 14%

300K

Outpatient visits, up 2.5%

8,400

Outpatient surgeries, up 9%

# SUTTER NORTH BAY

## GREAT Success—Predicting Cancer Risk Through Genetic Testing

Thanks to a multiyear fundraising effort led by Healdsburg resident Tara Jasper and supported by Shoshana Ungerleider, M.D., the Sutter Genetic Risk Evaluation and Testing (GREAT) Program launched in Sonoma County in 2022. Designed to identify predisposed cancer risks and catch the disease early, the program offers no-cost genetic testing and genetic counseling for patients ages 25 to 45 who have no personal history of cancer.

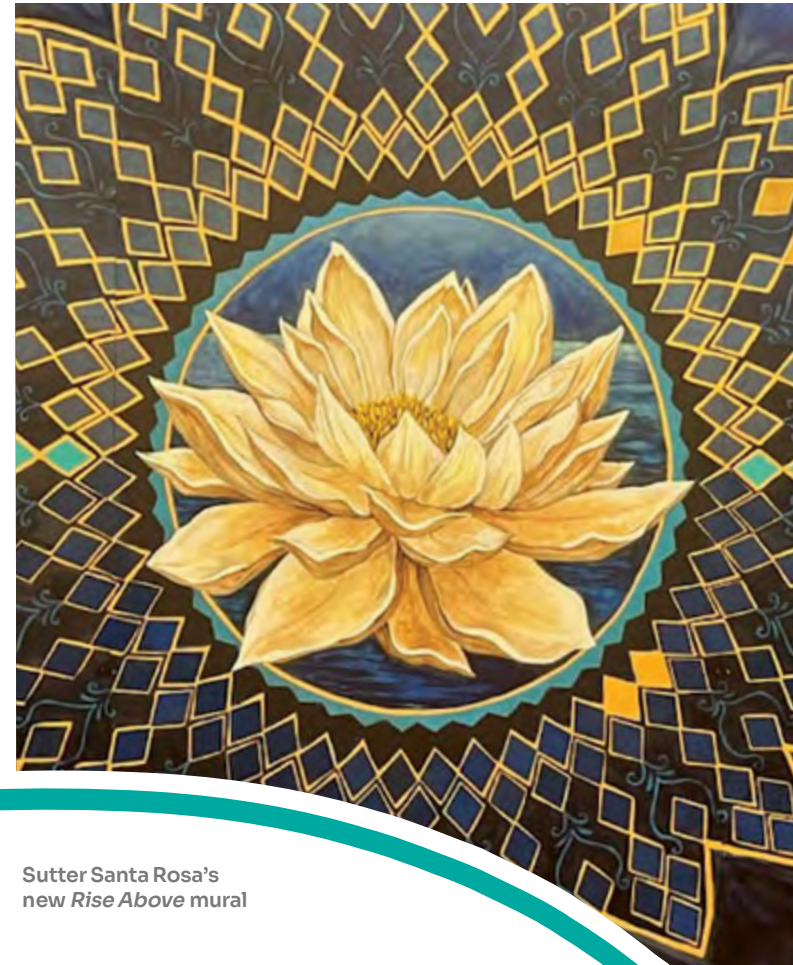
As of early 2024, the GREAT Program had provided 697 test kits to participants, with 219 completing testing. For 12 participants with detected gene mutations, Sutter genetic counselors recommended surveillance or management to reduce their risks and even facilitated testing for family members.

One of those patients is 40-year-old Jessica of Santa Rosa, who learned about the GREAT Program at the 2023 Catwalk for a Cure event. “I tend to delay preventative healthcare, but the process was incredibly easy,” she says. “And because my mother and father have both battled cancer, I wanted to know if I am also at risk.”

Turns out she is. Test results showed Jessica has the genetic marker for Lynch syndrome, which predisposes carriers to numerous forms of cancer.

“Within a few weeks I had scheduled a host of preventative tests that’ll be part of my ongoing health maintenance now,” Jessica says. “Initially, it felt scary to know I’m genetically predisposed for an increased risk of many serious types of cancer. But now I feel empowered to take charge of my health rather than wait for something bad to happen.”

Along with committing to annual dermatological, gynecological and gastrointestinal screenings, Jessica has altered her eating habits and exercises daily to lower her cancer risks. “I am grateful to generous donors who’ve allowed me to make preventative care a priority,” she says.



Sutter Santa Rosa’s new *Rise Above* mural

## Philanthropy Brings Emergency Pediatric Care to the North Bay

Today, Ben Moseley is a healthy, active 13-year-old, but in August 2022, a scary bacterial infection jeopardized his life. “It was frightening to see how quickly Ben’s health deteriorated without an easily recognizable cause,” says his mom, Sara Moseley.

After Ben suddenly began experiencing nausea, vomiting, rapid heart rate and confusion, Sara took him to Sutter Novato Community Hospital’s emergency department (ED), where personnel are trained specifically for pediatric conditions.

They administered fluids and ran multiple blood tests, which suggested acute kidney injury. Ben then received intravenous antibiotics and more fluids to steady his blood pressure and prevent organ damage.

But when he became increasingly agitated, Ben was transferred to the pediatric intensive care unit at Sutter’s California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco. There, it was determined that a *Staphylococcus aureus* infection had spread from his skin to his bloodstream, causing sepsis—a potentially fatal condition that occurs when the body’s response to an infection damages its own tissues.

“It felt like my body was on fire inside and I couldn’t stop the flames,” Ben reflects.

Sepsis is a leading cause of in-hospital deaths, claiming at least 18 kids in the U.S. daily. To prevent fatalities, sepsis must be identified and treated swiftly, but diagnosing it in babies and children is complex due to the variability of ages, weights and symptoms. To ensure early sepsis symptoms such as abnormal body temperature, bluish skin or lethargy aren’t missed, Sutter uses pediatric screening tools networkwide.

After three days in the pediatric ICU, Ben’s blood pressure, heart rate and mental state normalized. He spent a full week in the hospital, then returned home “good as new,” says Sara.

To ensure kids like Ben receive the best emergency care in the North Bay, community donors helped Sutter Novato’s ED become a certified pediatric receiving center in 2021. As part of that, the ED conducts pediatric sepsis screening within 30 minutes of arrival. Because of the certification, the Novato ED logged nearly 1,500 pediatric visits through the first half of 2023, a 20.5% increase over the same period in 2022.

Philanthropic gifts have also helped Sutter Novato purchase an MRI transport-capable ventilator for patients as small as 11 pounds, plus a high-fidelity simulation doll to practice neonatal codes and medical scenarios. Next, the ED will next acquire a pediatric version of the sim doll.

## Donor-Funded Mural Helps Cancer Patients Rise Above

For cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, there is a tradition of ringing a bell to celebrate the conclusion of treatments. Inspired to create a more meaningful alternative for patients at Sutter Santa Rosa’s infusion center, Jennifer Laurel Masuda, R.N., tapped her fine arts training to create an interactive mural titled *Rise Above*.

“This mural is a way to acknowledge the pain and suffering it takes for patients to show up here and move through treatment, but also leave on a positive note,” Masuda explains.

The donor-funded mural depicts a lotus flower—symbolic of faith, courage and intuition—above dark blue, uncertain waters. Double-sided diamond magnets are turned from dark blue to sparkling gold and placed by patients above the water line to signify the value of their journey and transformation.

“Having the space to share my story and choose a diamond to flip over was a touching and beautiful experience,” says Lisa Alvarez, M.D., a Sutter family practice doctor who was also one of Masuda’s patients, diagnosed with a rare, aggressive form of lung cancer while 8.5 months pregnant. “I found strength I didn’t know I had through my treatment, and *Rise Above* captures how someone can take control to pilot a ship when things are in trouble.”

Masuda sees many patients like Dr. Alvarez show fierceness in battling cancer. “Patients fueled my creative process,” she says. “I’m so lucky to care for them and also bring my art to help them.”

1,300+

Donors helped Sutter advance healthcare in Marin and Sonoma counties in 2023

\$6.3M

Invested across Sutter Pacific Medical Foundation, Novato Community Hospital, Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital and Sutter Lakeside Hospital in 2023

Sutter Santa Rosa  
Golf Invitational

\$520K

Raised for the hospital’s NICU and Shea House at the 2024 event, a new record

\$3.1M

Total raised since the first tournament in 2015



# SUTTER PALO ALTO MEDICAL FOUNDATION

## \$1 Million in Donor Gifts Activates 9 New Projects

As Sutter Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) strives to create the most innovative, personalized multispecialty care, there is a tremendous partnership between care teams and donors that brings new ideas into clinical practice. Now in its eighth year, PAMF philanthropy's Innovation Grants and Disbursements Program invites physicians and care teams from across the organization to pitch for funding from unrestricted donor gifts.

This year, nine projects were awarded Innovation Grants, with one additional project receiving philanthropic funding designated for oncology. In total, \$1 million was disbursed to advance healthcare in new ways, bringing the philanthropic investment to \$9.6 million since the program's inception.

Among the projects awarded funding are a cutting-edge remote ultrasound system that will broaden imaging access to rural and underserved communities, as well as a novel study using a new blood testing technology to better understand long COVID. An Innovation Grant will also enable PAMF to hire a nephrology nurse to facilitate more at-home dialysis for patients with chronic kidney disease.

"I'm so impressed by the talent and innovation of PAMF physicians and clinicians," says Rich Slavin, M.D., former PAMF CEO. "These caregivers are following in the strong PAMF tradition of pushing the envelope in multispecialty care to keep our communities healthy, and generous donors help turn their ideas into reality."



Ann Bowers

## \$13 Million Estate Gift Establishes Physician Development Institute at PAMF

A \$13 million gift from the estate of acclaimed tech executive and philanthropist Ann Bowers, who passed away in January, will establish the Ann S. Bowers Physician Development Institute at PAMF. The gift was made in honor of Ann's longtime primary care physician, Terrigal Burn, M.D., who retired from PAMF in 2022.

The Bowers Institute will build upon existing training for Sutter physicians in the Silicon Valley to give those in their third year the opportunity for focused instruction on nontechnical or "soft skills," such as empathy, communication and leadership. These unique programs will also be open to nurse practitioners, physician assistants and other advanced practice clinicians. The Bowers Institute will serve as a model for helping physicians rediscover their purpose and avoid burnout, and it will inform similar efforts across Sutter Health and for providers nationwide.

As a philanthropist and groundbreaking leader at Intel and Apple, Ann Bowers left an indelible mark on Silicon Valley and beyond, alongside her late husband Bob Noyce, co-founder of Intel and inventor of the integrated circuit. Ann's legacy will impact future generations of Sutter clinicians and the families who rely on them for compassionate, high-quality care.

# 4,100+

Donors helped advance care at PAMF in 2023

# \$14.7M

Philanthropy funds invested across PAMF in 2023

## Planned Giving 2023

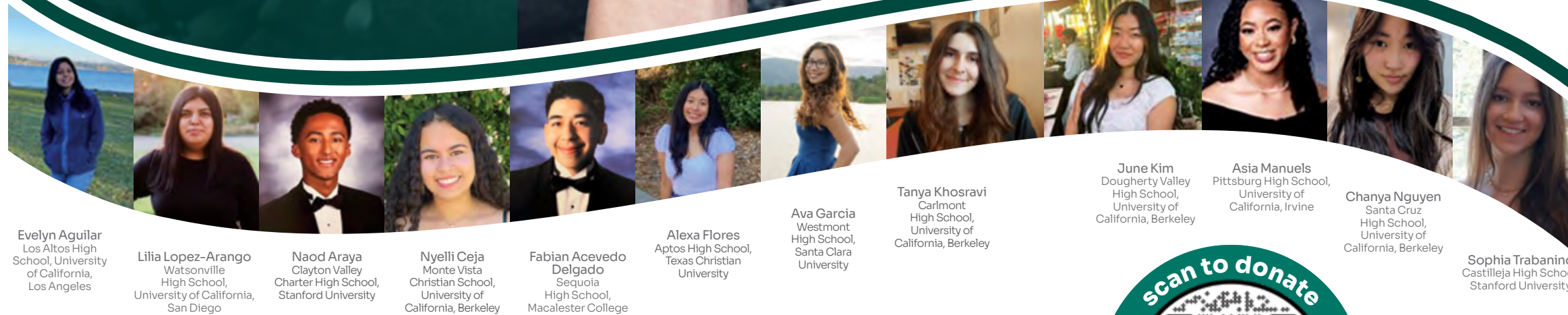
# 160

Legacy donors pledged

# \$6M+

# \$6.5M

Bequests supporting  
behavioral health, research, cancer care,  
cardiovascular care and more



Evelyn Aguilar  
Los Altos High School, University of California, Los Angeles

Lilia Lopez-Arango  
Watsonville High School, University of California, San Diego

Naod Araya  
Clayton Valley Charter High School, Stanford University

Nyelli Ceja  
Monte Vista Christian School, University of California, Berkeley

Fabian Acevedo Delgado  
Sequoia High School, Macalester College

Alexa Flores  
Aptos High School, Texas Christian University

Ava Garcia  
Westmont High School, Santa Clara University

Tanya Khosravi  
Carlmont High School, University of California, Berkeley

June Kim  
Dougherty Valley High School, University of California, Berkeley

Asia Manuels  
Pittsburg High School, University of California, Irvine

Chanya Nguyen  
Santa Cruz High School, University of California, Berkeley

Sophia Trabanino  
Castilleja High School, Stanford University

## Philanthropy Fosters Future Healthcare Professionals

The Sutter PAMF Pre-Med Scholarship program helps cultivate a pipeline of diverse doctors and other healthcare professionals. Launched by Palo Alto Foundation Medical Group physicians in 1993 and backed by donors since 2013, the program awards financial support and pairs students with physician mentors. For 2024, 12 PAMF Pre-Med Scholars are receiving \$30,000 each, awarded over five years. Most are the first in their family to attend college. Thank you, donors, for supporting these future healthcare stars.



# GREATER SACRAMENTO & CENTRAL VALLEY



Leineke friends and family tour the new cellular therapy lab at SMCS.

## Father-Daughter Donors Fund Cellular Therapy Lab at SMCS

The new Ron Leineke and Robin Leineke Cellular Therapy Lab at Sutter Medical Center, Sacramento (SMCS) held its ribbon-cutting event May 28, almost five years after the philanthropist father and daughter donated \$2 million to fund the transformative cryopreservation lab.

SMCS's comprehensive blood and marrow transplant (BMT) program averages 60 transplants annually, and the hematopoietic stem cell collections from transplant patients and donors have always been performed in-house. However, there wasn't a cellular therapy lab onsite, meaning collections had to be shipped to an outside facility for processing and cryopreservation.

Now, having the Leineke lab onsite eliminates the third-party processor, slashing wait times for critical stem cell collection results from 16 hours down to just two hours. The improved efficiencies also preempt unnecessary additional stem cell collections, as physicians can more easily determine whether a collection was adequate before the patient or donor's next appointment.

During its first year in operation, the Leineke lab will work toward Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy (FACT) accreditation, which will restrict the scope of services offered initially. But once accredited, the lab will be utilized across the entire Sutter Health network.

"Having a state-of-the-art cellular therapy lab in-house will elevate the comprehensive BMT program and the services offered across Sutter Health," said Lindsey Westerbeck, executive of laboratory services at SMCS. "It also opens an opportunity for future growth

and system expansion with novel stem cell therapies, such as CAR-T cell therapy for cancer treatment."

With lifetime giving exceeding \$4 million, the Leinekes have also underwritten cryopreservation and robotic surgery projects at SMCS to ensure world-class care close to home. In fact, Ron's first substantial gift to the hospital funded the da Vinci robotic surgical system, which was lovingly named "Ron the Robot."

Sadly, Ron passed away in December 2019, less than a year after his and his daughter's transformative donation to the cellular therapy lab. But his vision and generosity will live on at SMCS, supporting countless patients into the future.

Sutter philanthropy officer Bryan Belden, Robin Leineke, SMCS CEO Hollie Seeley and SMCS administrator Mark Schaefer commemorate the Leineke lab's opening.

## RON LEINEKE & ROBIN LEINEKE CELLULAR THERAPY LAB



Raymus Foundation board members learn about advancements in the radiology department.

## Foundation Gift Supports Central Valley Families

The Antone E. and Marie F. Raymus Foundation is steadfastly committed to advancing healthcare in the Central Valley. Since 2020, the foundation has supported a spectrum of initiatives at Sutter Health, enhancing heart and vascular care, radiation oncology, cancer therapy, telehealth services, breast imaging and care, neurosurgery and more.

Most recently, the Raymus Foundation made a \$1.37 million gift to advance women's and children's health at Sutter Memorial Medical Center, Sutter Tracy Community Hospital and Sutter Gould Medical Foundation.

The transformative donation funded three antepartum suites, allowing women who are experiencing complications before giving birth to stay at their local hospital versus traveling to Sacramento for care. The suites are equipped with 3D/4D Volusion Expert 22 ultrasound machines, the most intuitive, customizable and accurate models available today.

The Raymus Foundation's generosity also funded fetal monitors, intensive care infant beds, isolette warmers and chest compression systems. What's more, the impact of this gift moves Sutter Memorial's neonatal intensive care unit even closer to becoming a level III NICU, capable of supporting premature infants born as early as 32 weeks.

"We are so appreciative of the Antone E. and Marie F. Raymus Foundation for their remarkable partnership in caring for our most vulnerable patients," says Sutter perinatologist Sima Parmar, M.D. "Their generosity also provides our local community members access to the level of care they'd normally have to travel far to obtain."

# 5,700+

Donors helped Sutter advance care across Greater Sacramento and the Central Valley in 2023

# \$14M

Invested in care locally in 2023

## Planned Giving 2023

# \$4M

Bequests received to support inpatient and outpatient care

# \$4.6M

Pledged from estate plans to support pediatrics, cardiovascular services, graduate medical education, music therapy and greatest need, by 15 new donors who joined the Sutter Legacy Society



North Bay Philanthropy

**SUTTER HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF PHILANTHROPY, MARIN COUNTY**  
180 ROWLAND WAY, NOVATO, CA 94945

**SUTTER HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF PHILANTHROPY, SONOMA COUNTY**  
30 MARK WEST SPRINGS ROAD, SANTA ROSA, CA 94503

# Together, We Are Fueling a New Era at Sutter Health

At Sutter Health, philanthropy turns possibilities into realities. Thank you for your unwavering support of our mission to foster innovative care, advance medical technologies and enable research that enhances the health and well-being of our communities.

We hope you will consider continuing to support Sutter Health in Marin and Sonoma counties. To discuss how we can help you achieve your personal philanthropic goals, please contact Lisa Amador at [lisa.amador@sutterhealth.org](mailto:lisa.amador@sutterhealth.org) or Ryan Pocock at [ryan.pocock@sutterhealth.org](mailto:ryan.pocock@sutterhealth.org).

Join us in revolutionizing healthcare. As partners, we can ensure Sutter Health remains at the forefront of providing cutting-edge solutions and exceptional care. The future of healthcare is in our hands.

