

HOME CARE  
HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE  
ISABELLA & MENORAH CENTERS FOR  
REHABILITATION AND NURSING CARE  
ELDERPLAN/HOMEFIRST  
INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION IN  
PALLIATIVE CARE

# MJHS *in* FOCUS

Spring 2018

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**Thank you to all of our 2017 donors.** Without you, MJHS Health System would not be able to provide many of the extraordinary programs and services that have made such a difference in the lives of our patients and their families. Throughout this issue you will see your names recognized as a tribute to your support.

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MJHS Health System proudly welcomes

 *isabella*  
to the Family!

Isabella, which includes a **705-bed center for subacute rehabilitation and long-term care** as well as housing for independent seniors in northern Manhattan, has become an affiliated agency of MJHS Health System.

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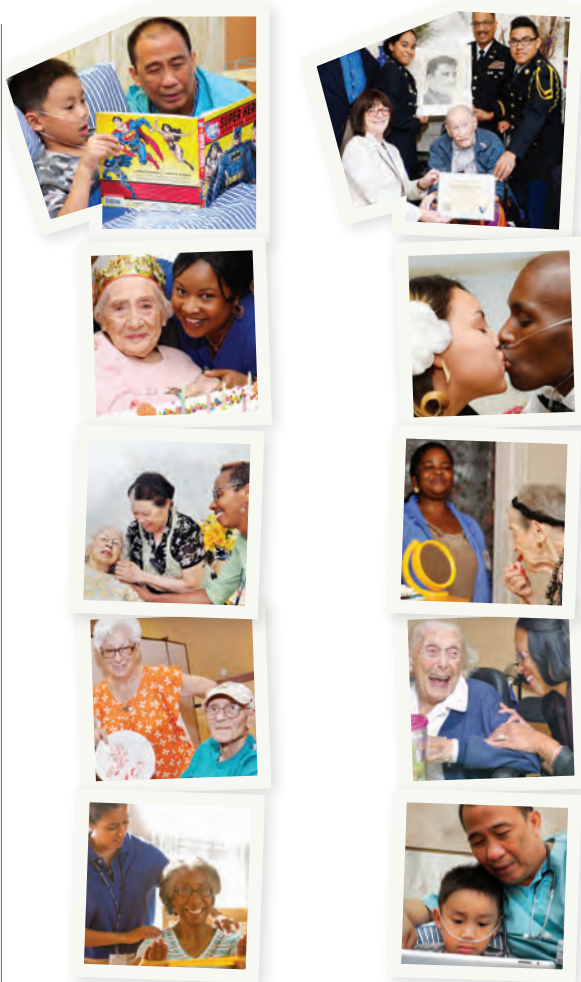
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# CELEBRATING 11 DECADES *of* CARING!

Although we've grown from caring for dozens of patients to thousands, our mission to provide the best care possible has never wavered. Here are real-life stories of how we bring "caring every minute, every day," to life.

**It all began with determination...**

## MJHS in FOCUS

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**DETERMINATION:** The Four Brooklyn Ladies

One hundred and ten years ago, four courageous women in Brooklyn saw people in desperate need of care and loving kindness. Determined to do something, they made it their mission to change what they saw.

The women knew change wasn't going to be easy. At the turn of the 20th century, the poor flooded the streets of New York City. Illness was everywhere, and help was scarce. So these four women—Sarah Webelovsky, Emma Rosenthal, Sarah Berlin and Flora Grodin—focused on their community and cared for those who needed help.

The Four Brooklyn Ladies went door to door seeking charitable support for their vision. They were resilient. They were passionate. And most of all—they were determined.

In 1907, their determination paid off. Based on the values of compassion, dignity and respect, they formed an organization to provide quality health care and a loving place to call home. And so began the story of MJHS Health System.



**2017 EMPLOYEE GIVING CAMPAIGN**

Every year our very own employees raise funds for the programs and services of MJHS! Thank you to our employees who not only give to us every day by caring for our community, but also go above and beyond to donate funds to ensure we can continue caring for those in need.

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Ruth Acosta

Pamela Adams

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Ziva Argevani-Zaff

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**COMPASSION: The Best Medicine**

When you become a parent, everything changes. Suddenly, you see first steps and kiss boo-boos. You hear about first loves and help with college applications. But life can become an emotional rollercoaster if your child is diagnosed with a life-limiting medical condition.

Max had a neurological disorder and couldn't sustain a good quality of life tied to a machine. A bilingual MJHS Hospice social worker gave the family real-time updates, care instructions in Chinese, and information about bilingual community services. Each week, a MJHS Hospice music therapist sang Max's favorite pop songs, while the family clapped along.

Many parents are surprised to learn about concurrent care—which makes it possible for children to pursue curative treatment and receive supportive hospice services. It also means each child has a team of clinicians who know how to address



the horrible symptoms that sometimes happen with intense curative treatments.

For Max's family, compassion meant having someone to talk to about significant decisions, someone to dry tears and to cheer when he had a good day.

Nearly two years after Max first received concurrent care, there's much to celebrate: he's playing basketball at school.

**DIGNITY: Looking in the Mirror and Feeling Empowered**



Marilyn, an 80-year-old widow, had many health issues, lived alone and was becoming a hoarder. Overwhelmed by life's recent circumstances, her expressive eyes showed a range of emotions. She missed her husband, was frail and struggled to maintain her dignity.

Elderplan/HomeFirst, a participating agency of MJHS Health System, was contacted. A few months after that crucial phone call, Marilyn walked with confidence to the mirror. Her apartment was tastefully decluttered. Her health greatly improved. All of this, she proudly gestured while applying lipstick, is because of the good people at Elderplan/HomeFirst.

Dignity matters, especially for those who are medically and socially vulnerable. For example, members like Marilyn work with a dedicated care manager. There are in-home visits from a nurse. Recommendations for healthy recipes, community activities, exercises and so much more are available. Phone support is also provided, because sometimes members just want to chat.

**RESPECT: Seeing Someone as More Than Their Medical Diagnosis**

"Each person comes through the door with a lifetime of stories. They also worry about being vulnerable and isolated," says Elizabeth, a certified nursing assistant who has worked at Menorah Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care for more than 16 years.

When Elizabeth learned her patient, David, loves art, she encouraged him to join the art therapy group. She also gave the 78-year-old colored pencils and a sketchbook. Some of the drawings shed light on his life. He had been an electrician by day and a singing waiter at night. Now, when he doesn't want to bathe or exercise, Elizabeth plays showtunes. David belts



them out and stretches his arms. Music continues to inspire him, even as dementia robs his memory.

*Continued on next page*

## THANK YOU

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# CELEBRATING 11 DECADES *of* CARING! *continued*

## HONOR: Saluting Service and Celebrating Life

Retired Capt. Epstein is a WWII veteran who served in Normandy, France and was among the liberators of Buchenwald concentration camp “When the captain speaks about his military service, you can feel him traveling back in time,” said Toby, the director of the We Honor Veterans program at MJHS Hospice.

That’s so much of what the We Honor Veterans program does. It recognizes and gives voice to heroes who deserve specialized care and recognition. We know how critical it is to understand the unique experiences and needs of every veteran. While some individuals served during a time of peace, others were on the frontlines. No matter where, when or how long a patient served, every veteran is treated with the same respect at MJHS. It’s our duty—and our privilege—to honor them.



These are some of the reasons why MJHS is a top-level partner of We Honor Veterans, a program of the **National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization** that is in collaboration with the **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**.

## ENCOURAGEMENT: How Motivating Words Help Patients Recover



Driving to work. Washing dishes. Going to the bodega. It’s easy to take mundane tasks for granted, until you can’t do them. When recovering from a stroke, hip or knee surgery, a heart attack, motorcycle accident or other intense injury or surgery, it’s normal to feel confidence and hope one minute, anxiety or

fear the next. After all, your home, which was once a refuge, may suddenly feel like a prison. Stairs might seem like Kilimanjaro.

What you want is someone who will encourage you to keep doing your exercises when you don’t feel like it...to gently pump you up and challenge you to keep going, and to cheer you on one milestone at a time.

Madeleine, a physical therapist at MJHS with 40 years of experience, does this all the time. She provides a steady stream of encouragement every day, building up both the muscles and the determination of those she treats. Her goal is to help patients regain as much independence as possible. And she does this with her patients in the comfort and privacy of their own homes through the MJHS Road to Recovery Rehabilitation Program.



2017 EMPLOYEE GIVING CAMPAIGN

**INSPIRATION:** Sealed with a Kiss—A Young Couple’s Love Inspires the World

Chris was shocked to learn he had a rare form of renal cancer that couldn’t be treated. No 25-year-old ever expects to need hospice. With just months to live, he turned to MJHS Health System for his care. While a serious diagnosis might crush the spirits of some, the college graduate was determined not to dwell on the amount of time he had left, but instead focus on how to live life to the fullest. He wound up inspiring the world.

It all started with a casual chat between Chris and his hospice social worker. Chris said he wanted a memorable way to express his love for long-time girlfriend, Terry, and their two-year-old son, CJ. The conversation led to talk of a wedding. Chris’s hospice care team, with the help of the young couple’s family and friends, threw a memorable ceremony and reception that left everyone with tears of joy. With sweeping oceanfront views in the background, Terry walked to her groom in a gorgeous gown. Little CJ wore a tux. Chris, who was wheelchair-bound, found the strength to stand for his bride. A balloon arch and flowers added whimsy and charm to the special day.



For one magical night, there was no talk of cancer. Less than three months later, Chris died and the world mourned.

Many people believe hospice is only for the elderly or those with just days to live. Some imagine it’s an experience that requires hushed tones and family huddled by a bedside. It isn’t. For Chris and countless others around the world, hospice is a time of love, of memory-making and countless sources of inspiration. Hospice is caring. MJHS does this every minute, every day.

**DEVOTION:** Committed to Caring



When Ruth’s 105th birthday approached, one question lingered in the air...what do you gift someone who’s lived through an entire century? Creating the guest list, deciding on decorations, choosing the cake and even selecting the playlist

seemed easy in comparison. For countless decades, Ruth has been devoted to her family and friends. She had a successful career and was married. Her mind is still pretty sharp. And, the twinkle in her eye reflects her delightful personality.

Devotion is a powerful word. It’s filled with emotion. It signals a deeper, lasting commitment. It’s something that can be seen, not just felt. And it’s what MJHS Health System clinicians like Heather radiate—whether they work in home care, hospice, palliative care, at Menorah Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care or for our health plans.

“My philosophy is simple—I see each person as an individual, and truly get to know them and their personality. My job isn’t being done right unless I’m someone they can trust,” says Heather.

*\*Names have been changed to protect our patients’ privacy.*

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## Andrew's Goals: Reduce Pain and Eat Spaghetti

I came to know Andrew when colon cancer and worsening dementia left him in shambles. His abdominal pain rated a 7 on a 10-point pain scale. His nausea was so severe that he was unable to take his medications or even swallow food. A leading New York hospital had referred him to the MJHS Home Care Advantage program—a Community-Based Palliative Care Program (CBPC) with a heightened sense of urgency for symptom management, rehabilitation and overall support. In collaboration with Andrew's physician, it was decided that he should receive a mix of skilled nursing services, physical therapy, social work, home health aide support, as well as palliative care.

All of Andrew's health concerns were addressed during our interdisciplinary team (IDT) meetings, which are attended by the nurse case manager, supervising nurse, clinical management team, social worker, rehab therapist, chaplain, as well as palliative care physician consultant.

One of the MJHS Palliative Care physicians advised me on several medications that could address Andrew's pain more efficiently while reducing his nausea. He also suggested that we replace his tablet medication with a patch to control both the pain and the nausea. Less than two weeks later, Andrew's pain and symptoms were greatly improved.

MJHS Home Care is the first health care organization in the country to receive community-based palliative care certification from the Joint Commission.

MJHS Home Care Advantage offers all the benefits provided by MJHS Home Care, plus specialized focus to help manage the uncontrolled symptoms associated with a serious illness.

The ripple effect was great: Andrew was able to resume taking his regular prescribed cholesterol and dementia control medications. But Andrew still needed our help. He couldn't get out of bed, bathe, dress or independently take his medications. He literally had to be spoon fed and was at a high risk for falling.

Enter Gary, a physical therapist with MJHS Home Care. He ensured Andrew received the proper medical equipment and taught him ways to make daily activities more manageable. In time, Andrew was able to feed himself, stand up, and even walk short distances on his own. We cheered when Andrew reached each milestone.

Best of all, Andrew's pain dropped to a score of 2 out of 10 ...and his nausea was at 0!

Today, Andrew has resumed many of his favorite activities, including watching soccer and enjoying the secret family recipe for spaghetti and meatballs. I've never been so excited to see someone eat! ■

—Galina  
MJHS Home Advantage Care Coordinator

For more information on our MJHS Home Care Advantage program call (212) 356-5300

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# Keys to Unlocking Memory Care

## MJHS receives a \$1.5 million grant from Sephardic Home for the Aged Foundation

**T**hrilled! That was the feeling when MJHS Foundation learned that **Sephardic Home for the Aged Foundation** had awarded MJHS Health System a **\$1.5 million grant**. As the exciting news circulated throughout the organization, many took a moment to reflect on its significance and symbolism.

The grant is for a dedicated 80-bed residence that will offer specialized non-pharmacological treatments, programs and services for Menorah Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care residents who have dementia. A portion of the funding will be devoted to ongoing staff training, continued education development opportunities and workshops for family caregivers. In addition, there will be an expansion of existing efforts that empower and reconnect memory-impaired residents with their passions and sense of identity.

“We selected MJHS Health System for this grant because of their already groundbreaking, research-based and dynamic dementia care, as well as shared legacy of providing compassionate care to vulnerable New Yorkers,” says Clifton Russo, Chair of the Sephardic Home for The Aged Foundation Grants Committee. “Menorah Center—the last not-for-profit Jewish nursing home in Brooklyn—is the right place for us to help preserve our mission. Creating a dedicated residence, much like the historical program at Sephardic Home for the Aged, is one of the many ways our foundation can continue to celebrate and advance our heritage of providing Jewish services, as well as reach the broader and more diverse elderly community.”

Menorah Center clinicians and researchers have for years demonstrated the positive benefits of creative arts and other therapies, including music, art, pet, aroma, tactile and dance/movement, for its residents with dementia. Implementation of the grant, beginning with residence design, staff training and family education workshops, starts in the first half of 2018. It will incorporate evidence-based

approaches to the changes in cognition that may occur with the progression of dementia.

“It’s an honor to have Sephardic Home for the Aged Foundation recognize our work, support our mission, as well as seek to expand the many ways we engage and help our residents recall aspects of their younger selves—whether through sensory activities, memory stimulation or other therapeutic experiences,” says Alexander Balko, president and CEO of MJHS Health System. “We also believe that one of the best ways to ensure the safety and quality of life of our residents with dementia is by empowering all of their caregivers. This generous grant will definitely help us further develop Menorah Center’s existing education programs and broaden the audience of our workshops that help clinicians or family members learn to better communicate with people throughout all stages of dementia.” ■



To learn more about our Keys to Connection campaign and our naming opportunities, contact **Linda Scalettar**, Chief Development Officer of MJHS Foundation, at **(212) 356-5300**

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## MJHS Health System proudly welcomes

**Isabella and MJHS Health System share rich histories that, combined, date back 250 years. Both organizations have a common mission and commitment to caring for at-risk patients, residents and members of the community.**

With the addition of Isabella, MJHS Health System now has approximately **5,350 employees** who care and provide services for more than **60,000 New Yorkers** each year.

Isabella is a not-for-profit organization that has pioneered care of the elderly since 1875. It offers a continuum of care to those seeking guidance on eldercare options, as well as those needing senior housing, sub-acute rehabilitation or long-term care. In addition, Isabella offers many community-based programs.

MJHS Health System president and CEO, **Alexander Balko**, has also become president and CEO of Isabella. Al served on the Isabella

board for 22 years before stepping down in 2016. As a result, he has extensive knowledge of the organization and a deep commitment to continuing Isabella's mission.

**Loyola Princivil-Barnett**, has become the senior vice president of operations and administrator of record, responsible for overseeing all Isabella activities. She is formerly the administrator at Menorah Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing Care. **Natalie Yakovleva**, who has returned to the MJHS Health System family after a four-year absence, has become the new administrator of record at Menorah Center.



The Newly Established  
**Jerry Gold  
Memorial Fund**  
IN SUPPORT OF THE MJHS HOSPICE  
STAR PROGRAM



2017 EMPLOYEE GIVING CAMPAIGN



# isabella to the Family!

“When Isabella was exploring options for partnerships, we were drawn to MJHS Health System because of our shared missions and our experience of effectively working together,” says **Hila Richardson**, DrPH, chair of the Isabella board of directors. “For years, our residents have benefitted from the compassionate care, that MJHS Hospice has provided at Isabella.”

“With this affiliation, Isabella receives much needed scale and stability and MJHS Health System will expand its innovative programs and services within upper Manhattan. In the process, both organizations expect to achieve greater efficiencies and opportunities to flourish,” says **Arthur Goshin**, MD, chair of the MJHS Health System board of directors.



Having personally cared for her husband with the support of a private home health aide, Judy learned firsthand the intense demands experienced by caregivers. Realizing that many other families face the same challenges, but do not have the resources to obtain the extra support they need, she established the Jerry Gold Memorial Fund.

The Fund will support the MJHS Golden Family STAR (Supportive Treatment and Resources) program, which aims to raise enough money to provide caregivers of hospice patients with additional home health aide hours.

These additional hours are above and beyond the reimbursed allotment, and allow caregivers the extra time to get to work on time, receive relief in case of an emergency, or simply have the opportunity to have a break.

To support the MJHS Golden Family STAR program, Judy appealed to her friends and family to contribute to the newly established fund.

**As of February 2018, 53 gifts have been made in Jerry’s honor resulting in over \$15,000.** Thanks to Judy’s generosity and the generosity of her friends, over 750 additional home health aide hours will be provided to hospice patients in 2018.

If you are interested in supporting the STAR program, contact the Foundation at **(212) 356-5300**

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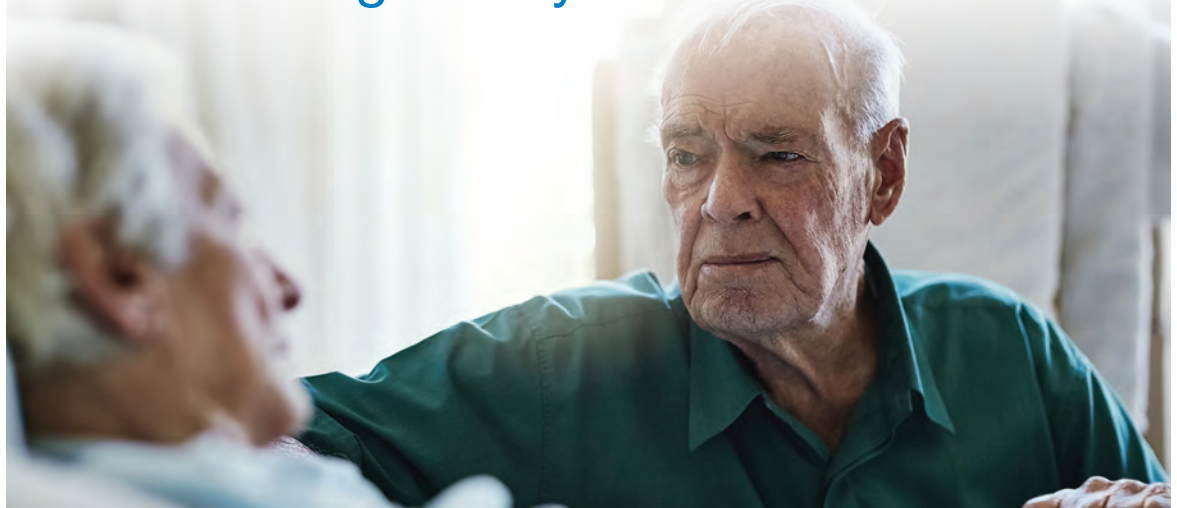
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## Our Mission at Work

# Caring for Elderplan Members Who Call a Skilled Nursing Facility *Home*



Nelya and I are both nurse practitioners, or NPs as you may know us. We care for Elderplan members who live at a skilled nursing facility. This is the story of one of our members, who is 93, her 94-year-old husband, Benjamin, and their daughter, Leslie.

Margot is a vulnerable bed-bound member who became sick. The nurse at the skilled nursing facility where she lived called us one weekend because she was worried. It's always scary when a 93-year-old's condition suddenly changes. We quickly went to see Margot. After examining her and listening to her lungs, we believed it was pneumonia but needed to do tests to confirm, which we ordered.

We immediately called Margot's daughter Leslie to make her aware of the change in her mother's condition. Leslie is very attentive. She works a hectic schedule and visits her parents as often as she can. When she can't be there, we keep her up-to-date, so she worries a little less and still feels connected

to her parents' Plan of Care. The next time Leslie visited, we went through her mom's chart, explaining and answering questions along the way.

Most skilled nursing facilities only have doctors available a few hours a week, but we are different. We are there eight hours a day, Monday through Friday, and it doesn't stop there. When our members (like Margot) become sick we don't wait—we go in nights and on weekends to check on them and to make sure they receive the care and attention they need. Knowing that families, in stressful situations like this one want and need information, we give them our cell phone numbers so they can call us day or night if something comes up.

We'd like to thank

# Ed Sheeran

for his generous support to **MJHS Hospice and Palliative Care!**

For more information on how to donate, call (212) 356-5300.

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*I just wanted to take this time to commend the services of Nelya and Nadege. Both are Nurse Practitioners through Elderplan for my parents who are long-term residents of a Skilled Nursing Facility.*

*Their diligence in ordering further tests for my mother Margot resulted in confirming pneumonia and they started antibiotics immediately.*

*The proactiveness of this team has really given me the confidence that both my parents, who are in their nineties, will be recipients of even more personal care as they live out their remaining years.*

*I also appreciate the excellent line of communication both professionals have established with me. I highly commend their commitment to their profession and to their patients.*

*-Leslie*



Because Elderplan is committed to providing members with the care they need without the disruption of an emergency room visit, Margot's pneumonia was treated right there in her own bed. Leslie was pleased with the plan because she really didn't want her mom going to the hospital, but Benjamin needed a little reassurance. He wanted the best for his bride of 70 years and, being a bit old school, felt she needed to be in the hospital. Leslie reassured her dad and said "if I didn't trust the NPs, I wouldn't have her treated in the nursing home."

His daughter's words, along with seeing firsthand the care we were giving, made all the difference in the world. Fear gave way to trust. Benjamin relaxed and focused again on holding Margot's hand.

**A week later, Margot was better. Her fever was gone and her appetite came back.**

It's so rewarding when we can help a member like Margot get better, plus provide the comfort and peace of mind a family desperately needs.

— Nadege and Nelya  
 Elderplan/HomeFirst Nurse Practitioners

*Names, photographs and some details have been changed to protect member privacy.*

**Elderplan Advantage for Nursing Home Residents (HMO SNP)** is a plan created for Medicare beneficiaries who live in one of Elderplan's contracted nursing facilities.



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The MJHS Golf Classic is our annual event dedicated to raising funds for the underfunded programs and services of MJHS. **Thank you to all our 2017 Golf Classic Supporters!**

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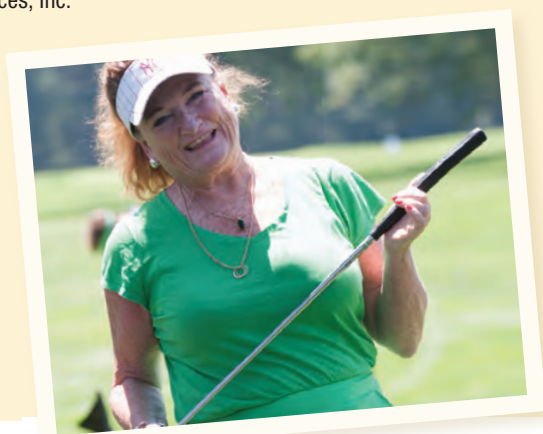
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## What Will be Your Legacy?

In 1954, Marcia's father made his first gift to MJHS in memory of his late wife as a token of gratitude for the care she received. "Fifty dollars was a lot of money back then," noted Marcia as she pulled out the handwritten receipt. Her father continued to make that contribution every year, and when he passed away many years later, Marcia, his youngest daughter, continued this annual tradition to honor his legacy.

Over 60 years later, as Marcia was thinking about her own legacy, she learned about the **Sustainers Society**, a new planned giving program for MJHS supporters who want to leave a meaningful, personal legacy of caring. Marcia chose to include MJHS in her estate plan through a bequest in her will. This is one of the many ways she could have

chosen to leave a planned gift. Other ways include a charitable remainder trust, gift annuity, or including MJHS as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy or retirement plan.

Planned giving helps ensure that the innovative programs offered by MJHS Health System will be sustained into the future, and allows us to continue expanding the exceptional services we deliver with compassion, dignity and respect.

Today, the **Sustainers Society** is continuing to grow with seven new members choosing to leave a legacy this year alone.

**Have you thought about what your legacy will be?**

For more information on planned giving, please contact the Foundation at (212) 356-5300

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Mr. and Mrs. Hank Federman  
Mrs. Marilyn Kagan  
Dr. Laurie Gilden Lindner  
Estate of Lydia C. Heller\*  
Estate of Olga Hollander\*  
Ms. Marcia M. Lotto  
Dr. Joyce Lowinson  
Estate of Florence Neiken\*  
Estate of Saul Shapiro\*  
Estate of Jutta Tannhauser\*

\*Posthumous



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