

Advancing Medicine. *Touching Lives.*

RHODE ISLAND HOSPITAL • 2018



**Sinclair Family Brings Smiles
to Many** —Page 5



Rhode Island Hospital
Lifespan. Delivering health with care.®



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We invite you to learn more by contacting Ryan Whalen at 401-444-6311.

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COVER: Patient Emma Delacruz at Samuels Sinclair Dental Center.



As president of Rhode Island Hospital, I am proud of its long history as an integral part of our community. For decades, donors have supported the hospital by giving back—to recognize a loved one, in gratitude for care they received, or to benefit the community. Many families and foundations have been contributing for generations, like the Sinclair family you’ll read about in this issue of *Advancing Medicine. Touching Lives*. Since opening its doors in 1931, the Samuels Sinclair Dental Center has been providing dental care to the region’s underprivileged children and adults with disabilities. Today, we remain grateful that Rosalyn Sinclair continues her family’s 87 years of continuous support through generous gifts and personal involvement.

Margaret M. Van Bree

**Margaret M. Van Bree,
MHA, DrPH**

President, Rhode Island Hospital
and Hasbro Children’s Hospital

Rhode Island Hospital is part of the Lifespan Cancer Institute, where exciting initiatives are taking place every day. Oncologist Don S. Dizon, MD, joined Lifespan Cancer Institute last year as director of women’s cancers, and it’s a privilege to share with you his work on the advancement of targeted therapies and treatment. Additionally, neurologist Brian R. Ott, MD, is making remarkable strides in his research to both prevent Alzheimer’s disease and delay its progression through early intervention.

I am honored to recognize the 2017 Honor Roll of Supporters who are the life blood of our hospital. Because of the ongoing generosity of our donors, Rhode Island Hospital will continue to be at the forefront of compassionate, cutting-edge medical care for many years to come. Thanks for all you do.

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Alzheimer's Prevention Efforts

Changes in the brain related to Alzheimer's disease occur years before symptoms appear. That's why neurologist and researcher Brian R. Ott, MD, is working both to prevent Alzheimer's disease (AD) from developing and to intervene early to delay its progression.

And he has the generous support of the Rhode Island Foundation to help achieve these goals.

"We're seeing a paradigm shift in the way Alzheimer's disease is viewed," says Dr. Ott, Director of the Alzheimer's Disease and Memory Disorder Center at Rhode Island Hospital. "Research indicates that AD has a long preclinical phase and lifestyle-related risk factors. Prevention and early intervention, therefore, hold significant promise for a future without AD. We are grateful to the Rhode Island Foundation for helping us get there."

The foundation has awarded Rhode Island Hospital over \$100,000 in grants to advance the memory program's work. One such effort is to increase enrollment in the



Dr. Brian R. Ott discusses Alzheimer's disease with a patient

Rhode Island Alzheimer's Disease Prevention Registry, established by Dr. Ott in 2012.

The registry has two purposes. The first is to educate Rhode Islanders about, and thereby improve, brain health. The second is to build a pool of 1,000 potential participants in local and national Alzheimer's studies conducted at Rhode Island Hospital. Currently, close to 600 people are enrolled in the registry. Additionally, a pilot project is under way with Anchor Medical Associates—one of the largest primary care groups in Rhode Island—to enroll patients over the age of 50 who have memory complaints or a family history of dementia. These patients will receive annual memory testing, information on genetic risk and brain-healthy lifestyles, and eligibility to participate in studies and clinical trials.

"Risks to brain health include obesity, smoking, diabetes, lack of exercise, depression, and hypertension," Dr. Ott says. "There's a window of opportunity to address these risks to prevent or delay AD's onset. With the potential for disease-modifying treatments on the horizon, early diagnosis could be life-altering for people experiencing the first signs of the disease, as well."

More than 25,000 Rhode Islanders are currently living with AD. That number will surge as baby boomers age. A workforce trained to meet this challenge is essential, notes Registry Program Coordinator Charles Denby.

"Ultimately," he says, "the Rhode Island Foundation's support will give primary care providers statewide the tools they need to identify cognitive problems early and promote brain health."

To learn more or enroll in the Alzheimer's Prevention Registry, visit www.lifespan.org/preventionregistry, email memory@lifespan.org, or call 401-444-0789.

Smiles Abound at Samuels Sinclair Dental Center

Rhode Island Hospital's Samuels Sinclair Dental Center opened its doors in 1931 with a mission to ensure that children whose parents could not afford to pay would receive adequate dental care. In addition to providing dental care to children, the center is the primary dental provider in our region for patients of all ages with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. It is one of the first in the country to provide comprehensive dental care within a hospital setting, seeing referrals from various clinics and the emergency department.

For Elizabeth G. Benz, DMD, Director of the Samuels Sinclair Dental Center, each day brings new opportunities to make a difference in the lives of her patients.

"I absolutely relate to the fears of my patients; it's why I became a dentist," she says. "Our goal is to really get to know our patients so we can tailor our treatment to fit their individual needs and behaviors and alleviate fears in a friendly and fun way."

Although much has changed at the center in 87 years, one constant remains: the ongoing support from its founding family. Through the Joseph S. and Rosalyn K. Sinclair Foundation, Rosalyn continues the family's legacy of generosity, enabling the center to reinvigorate the residency program, fund new operatories, upgrade equipment, and renovate the facility.

Recently, Roz and her family made generous six-figure gifts to support renovations to the center's waiting area and for the purchase of a cutting-edge tissue laser that will revolutionize dental care. With the new laser, dentists can reliably perform procedures anesthesia-free and pain-free.



Jaylin and Jayvany enjoying the waiting area

Understanding that the center's waiting room is the first impression for patients who are filled with anxiety, Roz focused on recreating the artwork that adorned its walls in the 1930s, when calming forest scenes sprinkled with hidden creatures entertained children. It's not uncommon to find Roz dropping off books, colored pencils, and drawing pads that make the space even more inviting.

"Without the support of Roz and her family, we would never be able to do what we do," says Dr. Benz. "Roz is a true partner in the center, wholly committed to making sure we have the resources we need. We couldn't be more grateful. She is responsible for literally thousands of smiles every year."



Dr. Don S. Dizon with a patient

Seeking Cures, Improving Lives for Women with Cancer

Women's cancer specialist Don S. Dizon, MD, greets every new patient the same way—with hope and promise. And candor.

“I start by telling my patients that I will provide them the best treatment possible,” says Dr. Dizon. “Depending on their disease, that means the best chance at a long-lasting remission, if not a cure. Novel therapies are providing women with additional ways to treat their disease. And I finish the appointment with a vow: ‘If I don’t think I can help, I’ll let you know. Whatever the future holds, I’ll be there with you.’”

A year ago, Dr. Dizon joined the Lifespan Cancer Institute to lead the women’s cancer academic program and direct medical oncology at Rhode Island Hospital. Trained at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer

Center, he’s been in practice for 16 years and held top positions in women’s oncology at Massachusetts General Hospital and, before that, Women & Infants.

He’s passionate about his patients, palliative care, survivorship, young women’s cancer, sexual health, and clinical research; is active in countless professional organizations and editorial boards; speaks nationally and internationally on a variety of women’s cancer issues; and is prolific on social media, where he’s an award-winning blogger.

He uses his different platforms to promote the academic and clinical work in women’s oncology taking place at the Lifespan Cancer Institute.

“It’s a source of great pride to help put our institution in the spotlight and share all the work we’re doing across Lifespan,” he says. “Dr. Howard Safran (Lifespan Cancer Institute’s Chief of Hematology and Oncology) asked me to create a vision for women’s cancer that harmonizes clinical programs with accelerated investigation of new therapies and alliances with Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. We want to make sure everybody inside and outside of the region knows about the Lifespan Cancer Institute.”

“Cancer needs to be incorporated into life, not the other way around. I think we can—and will—do great things at Lifespan Cancer Institute for women with cancer.”

—Dr. Don S. Dizon

Patients in our program can expect compassionate, leading-edge treatment for their disease. Oncology is moving away from a “one-size-fits-all” approach to a genomic approach tailored to the individual’s tumor, known as “precision” or personalized treatment. Breast cancers, for example, are tested for subtypes—HER 2 positive or negative, hormone receptor positive or negative, triple negative—so that targeted therapies can be employed to block and reverse their growth.

Genomic studies not only identify cell mutations that respond to specific drugs, but also the likelihood of some cancers to recur. Recurrence is a common challenge of certain cancers, particularly those discovered late in their progression. For example, 70 percent of ovarian cancers are diagnosed in stage 3 or 4. Dr. Dizon recently opened a phase-two study of immunotherapy for relapsed clear-cell ovarian cancer,

which is especially resistant to treatment. “Clinical trials are the pathway to “better”—better treatments, better outcomes, and a future without cancer,” he wrote in one of his monthly blogs.

The experience of his patients drives Dr. Dizon’s dedication to research. “I’m touched by every one of them,” he says. But he draws special inspiration from the cancer journey of a close friend from college, Kristina, who was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer shortly after the birth of her second child. “She handled her breast cancer with dignity and grace, even when she felt at her worst,” Dr. Dizon wrote in a memorial blog. “She taught me how to be a better friend, husband, father, and oncologist.”

Dr. Dizon and his colleagues are devoting their careers to finding cures for women’s cancers. Short of that, they’re hoping to turn cancer into a manageable, chronic condition. Above all, they want their patients to live their lives as long and as well as possible.



Deidre, patient, and Dr. Dizon

“Cancer needs to be incorporated into life, not the other way around. I think we can—and will—do great things at Lifespan Cancer Institute for women with cancer.”

The Lifespan Cancer Institute offers patients a diverse portfolio of cancer studies. For more information on clinical trials available at Lifespan Cancer Institute, visit <https://www.lifespan.org/centers-services/cancer-research-clinical-trials/available-studies>.

Family Turns Tragedy into Opportunity to Help Others



The late John Martins and Jonathan Turmel

Outside of family and a penchant for lending a helping hand, there was nothing John Martins loved more than tow trucks. He bought his first rig when he was 16 and began honing his business skills, towing and selling junk cars.

It didn't take long before John's hard work transformed his single-truck business, Sterry Street Towing, into one with more than four dozen trucks servicing the region. Never resting on his laurels, John tapped his passion for all things automotive to found East Coast Collision Center and, in 2014, became the owner of Courtesy Auto Group, which includes Kia, Hyundai, and Mitsubishi new car dealerships. Sadly, in September 2015, John's life was

cut short as the result of injuries sustained while doing what he loved.

Traveling north on I-95 after responding to a rollover in Connecticut, a tire on John's tow truck blew, sending the vehicle down an embankment, striking a tree and bursting into flames. Suffering second- and third-degree burns across 85 percent of his body, John was airlifted to the Rhode Island Burn Center at Rhode Island Hospital, where he underwent more than a dozen skin graft surgeries. For three weeks, John fought for his life. He was placed in a medically induced coma to keep him as comfortable as possible, but the burns were too severe to recover from. Twenty-three days after his accident, John succumbed to his injuries.

Located on the fifth floor of Rhode Island Hospital and featuring advanced care through a trauma intensive care unit (TICU) and burn intensive care unit (BICU), the Burn Center is one of 65 centers in the country accredited by the American Burn Association as a center of excellence. It is the only certified burn center in the state, caring for adults and children across Rhode Island, eastern Connecticut, and southeastern Massachusetts.

"All burn injuries are extremely painful, but once more than 20 percent of the body is impacted, the burns tax every part of the body, and that includes the heart and lungs," says David T. Harrington, MD, director of the center, and the physician who treated John. "For patients going through severe burn trauma, family support is crucial. The emotional and psychological toll of being burned is unimaginable."

To honor John's memory, his family and friends established the John Martins Foundation to help



families of patients suffering life-threatening burns. In gratitude for the expert and compassionate care John received—and to give back to the hospital that valiantly attempted to save his life—the foundation recently made a generous \$250,000 gift to support the creation of a dedicated family room for burn and trauma patients’ families.

“This transformational gift will have a tremendous impact on our patients and their families,” says Dr. Harrington. “When a family has a loved one here for weeks or months for treatment, their needs are varied and complex and this new room will help meet those needs.”

“Although his life came to an early end, we wanted to continue his legacy of giving and that’s what the foundation represents...”

—Jonathan Turmel, John’s grandson

Once completed, the family room will be located in the hospital’s southwest pavilion and will feature amenities aimed at making it a home away from home with a dining area where families can eat together; space for rest; and a quiet area to work.

“Even though you have a family member in the hospital, life doesn’t stop,” adds Dr. Harrington. “Taking care of our patients also means taking care of their family. Words cannot express how grateful we are to

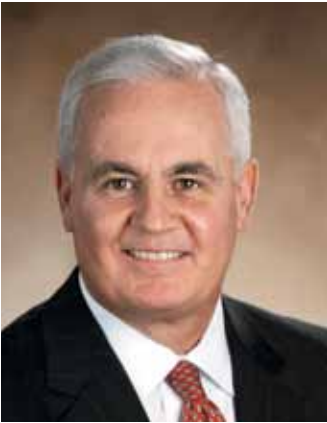
the Martins family for turning their tragedy into an opportunity to help others.”

“My grandfather was my mentor and an amazing man who would give you the shirt off his back if you needed it. After he passed, we were flooded with stories about the good deeds he did anonymously that we never knew about,” says Jonathan Turmel, President of the John Martins Foundation. “Although his life came to an early end, we wanted to continue his legacy of giving and that’s what the foundation represents. Helping families going through what we went through is something that I know would make my grandfather proud.”

Rhode Island Burn Center Facts

- The only accredited burn center in the state
- Cares for both adults and children
- Treats nearly 900 patients for burns annually
- Provides advanced ICU care, comprehensive wound care, rehabilitation therapy, and comprehensive outpatient care
- Organizes a monthly support group for burn survivors of all ages and their families

Extraordinary Volunteer Leadership



Roger N. Begin

Roger N. Begin

Chairman
Rhode Island Hospital Foundation
Board of Trustees

Our trustees are very special people. As chair of the Rhode Island Hospital Foundation Board of Trustees, I feel privileged to work alongside these generous and visionary leaders. Not only do they deeply understand the role our hospital plays in the community, they are personally committed to advancing our philanthropic mission. Their many contributions make a difference in the lives of our neighbors and loved ones.

We are fortunate to have a Foundation Board composed of different professional backgrounds and diverse ways of thinking. Each trustee brings his and her own special expertise to the role of hospital ambassador.

It is my pleasure to introduce you to one of our newest members, Sheryl Amaral, whose advocacy and experience in our community, as well as within Lifespan, add valuable insights to our ranks.

Thank you to all who serve on the Foundation Board of Trustees for the benefit of the health and well-being of our community.

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Meet Sheryl Amaral



Sheryl Amaral, MBA, MS CCC-SLP

Health care has been the focus of Sheryl Amaral's personal and professional passions for nearly three decades. She holds an MBA in health care management, a master's degree in speech language pathology, and a National Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Sheryl's connection to Lifespan and its affiliated hospitals is a long and deeply committed one; she is a standing member of the Hasbro Children's Hospital Heroes Ball Committee as well as the Lifespan Cancer Institute's Cancer Oversight Committee. The committee is tasked with providing global oversight of the quality of care provided to all cancer patients and setting programmatic goals. With a breadth of experience and clinical knowledge, Sheryl is the only member of the community to sit on the committee. And this past fall, Sheryl became one of the newest members of the Rhode Island Hospital Foundation Board of Trustees. Her passion is truly boundless.

"Educating the community about what we have here is the most important thing we can do as ambassadors of the hospital. I'm just blown away by the expertise of those who have dedicated their life's work to their profession and to their patients. There is no question that Rhode Island Hospital and Lifespan attract the best of the best," adds Sheryl.

In 2003, Sheryl and her late husband, Everett, an engineer and construction manager who served on Rhode Island Hospital's President's Pursuit of Excellence committee, purchased a historic mill in Providence that has since become home to several Lifespan programs, including the Lifespan Recovery Center.

"We are so grateful to see this space being utilized for such crucial work. We feel that we are helping our hospitals keep up with the rapid innovations in health care," says Sheryl. "Philanthropy can take on many forms beyond writing a check."

The 1863 *Society*
Rhode Island Hospital

Philanthropy is essential to sustaining every successful academic medical center.

It is because of the generosity and kindness of its supporters that Rhode Island Hospital continues to thrive and grow while meeting the needs of our community since 1863.

The 1863 Society celebrates donors who have made an annual commitment of \$250 or more to our hospital's Fund for Excellence (noted on pages 13-15 with a ▼). The fund supports our areas of greatest need and lifesaving work, while investing in the future of medicine, research and medical education across southeastern New England.

With your generosity, we can continue to provide the most advanced and superb care right here in Rhode Island. Through our unyielding pursuit of excellence in service, education, research, technology and information, we will continue to be recognized regionally and nationally for the clinical expertise delivered through our centers of excellence.

To learn more about The 1863 Society, including giving levels and benefits, please visit rhodeislandhospital.org/1863-society.

Wife Honors Husband With Gifts to Transplant Center



Pat and Mike Monti

Patricia Monti's philanthropy is inspired by her late husband Michael, who gave to the community generously and without fanfare.

Pat shares a poignant story, illustrative of Mike's approach to helping others. One day during their retirement in Florida, he walked into the parish office to offer support for needy families at Christmas. The secretary asked, "Can I help you?" and Mike responded with, "I am here to help *you*." That holiday, he made sure that every family in need had presents under the tree. But he kept the act of charity to himself. Pat learned about it from the parish secretary only after her husband of 43 years passed away in 2004.

"That's the kind of man Mike was," Pat says. "A quiet philanthropist."

The couple met in high school and married after college. They raised four children, who blessed them with 11 grandchildren. After 37 years in the automotive business, Mike retired as president of the aftermarket division of Allied Signal. But decades of managing his

Type 1 diabetes took their toll. At the age of 60, Mike's kidneys began failing. He needed a transplant.

As luck would have it, Rhode Island Hospital had just opened the Transplant Center in 1997. Mike was one of the first patients, receiving a kidney from their son David, then 29. Both recovered well and Mike resumed retirement with Pat, splitting their time between Florida and Rhode Island. The two enjoyed six more wonderful years together before Mike succumbed to renal failure following cardiac surgery. He was 66, a beloved family man, and the light of Pat's life.

To honor his memory and give back to the team that took such good care of her husband and son, Pat donates annually to the Transplant Center. Her generosity supports the needs of patients, research, and academic training.

This year, Pat made an additional gift to help update the conference room used daily by the transplant team. The renovated room—with new and better technology and more space to accommodate meetings with guest speakers and visiting experts—will bear the name of Anthony Monaco, MD, the pioneering physician who performed Mike's kidney transplant 21 years ago.

The Transplant Center's co-directors—nephrologist Reginald Gohh, MD, and surgeon Paul Morrissey, MD—say Pat's steadfast generosity has helped grow the center into a clinical and academic powerhouse, where new medicines and techniques are improving outcomes and quality of life for patients with kidney failure.

Pat treasures the time she had with Mike, especially the years following his kidney transplant, which she views as a beautiful gift. She hopes her philanthropy will help more transplant patients and their families live their lives to the fullest and savor every moment.

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Rhode Island Hospital Foundation is proud to recognize its generous supporters whose philanthropy enables the hospital to provide exceptional, compassionate, patient-centered care to the people of Rhode Island and beyond. This list reflects cumulative gifts and pledges of \$250 or more in the calendar year 2017. Many thanks for your generosity!



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Patient Makes Estate Gift to Radiation Oncology



It was 1976 and John Brezinski was finishing a year of school in New Jersey. For close to six months, the 23-year-old hadn't felt right as he struggled with constant tiredness. When he finally went to a doctor, he was shocked to learn he had an advanced form of Hodgkin's lymphoma.

"I never imagined it would be cancer," says John, now 65. "At 23, you're not thinking about a diagnosis like that."

John returned home to Massachusetts and began chemotherapy at a local hospital. Due to John's condition, his oncologist directed him to a clinical trial at Rhode Island Hospital that was using a then leading-edge linear accelerator to deliver radiation. The trial was John's best chance for survival.

"I was told there was around a five percent chance that I'd reach 40 years of post-treatment survival, and here

I am in my forty-second year," he says. "Rhode Island Hospital extended my life beyond anything I ever expected."

Throughout the years, John continued to be cared for by Rhode Island Hospital for various medical issues that arose, either from the original cancer or side effects from its aggressive treatment. Today, John, who is originally from Taunton, Massachusetts, is retired and living on Cape Cod with what he calls "a nice quality of life," enjoying clamming and kayaking Pleasant Bay. He also began to make plans for his future.

One of his first, and easiest, decisions was to make a \$40,000 planned gift from his estate to Rhode Island Hospital to create a special discretionary fund in support of radiation oncology.

"I wanted to make a gift that gave the department the flexibility to use as they wish, based on the most crucial needs they have," says John. "Radiation oncology is the reason I'm still here, and I want my gift to have an impact on others."

"Whether it was Dr. Anthony Yu in 1977, Dr. Albert Telfeian in 2013, or Dr. Amanda Noska in 2014, Rhode Island Hospital is consistently expert and compassionate in its delivery of care. And when you're facing a bleak diagnosis at 23, that makes all the difference in the world. They gave me back my life. That's something I have never forgotten," adds John.