



NEWSLETTER

EDITION
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Photo from Penn State Shenango Volunteers at MERP. See page 3 for story.

Letter from our Director...

It's been a very busy few months at the UPMC Horizon and Jameson Foundations. From opening a third MERP location in New Castle this past June to a Cancer Survivor's Celebration in October, we've stayed busy investing in our local hospitals, healthcare workers, patients and community health throughout Mercer and Lawrence County. We're excited to share some highlights of these activities.

None of this would be possible without your support. As always, thank you for your partnership and generosity in helping us make our region healthier!

Adam Nowland, *Director*

UPMC Horizon Community Health Foundation
UPMC Jameson Health Care Foundation



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New Castle MERP Grand Opening Celebration

A few months ago, MERP (the Medical Equipment Recycling Program) celebrated a new milestone: the opening of a new location in New Castle, PA in the UPMC Jameson Professional Building. The location is open to the public and allows customers to borrow durable medical equipment. The New Castle MERP location is MERP's third facility, joining Farrell and Greenville, and offers the same services. It is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week from 11 AM to 4 PM.

To celebrate, MERP hosted a Grand Opening on June 20th, featuring a ribbon cutting attended by UPMC Jameson and Horizon Hospital and Foundation leadership, MERP staff, and representatives from the community and State Representative Marla Brown's office. The new location was made possible in large part by a generous, six-figure grant from the May Emma Hoyt Foundation. The UPMC Horizon Community Health Foundation thanks everyone who attended, with a special thank you to the dedicated MERP team of staff and volunteers who serve the community across all three locations.



To learn more about MERP, visit upmchorizonfoundation.org/merp





Penn State Shenango PTA Club Volunteers at MERP

On Tuesday, October 15th, a group of 27 Penn State Shenango students rolled up their sleeves to volunteer at the Horizon Foundation's Medical Equipment Recycling Program facility in Farrell, Pennsylvania. The students are part of Penn State's Physical Therapist Assistant Club and welcomed the opportunity to perform some community service in support of MERP.



The students had the opportunity to meet MERP's staff and learn more about the program's mission, resources, and impact in the community as it loans out equipment like wheelchairs, walkers, shower chairs or similar devices to area residents in need. They then had the opportunity to spend several hours assisting MERP's staff and volunteers with a variety of tasks. Students assembled storage carts, sanitized and organized medical equipment, swept and mopped floors, and cleaned windows.



Gizelle Dean, the PTA club advisor, said that as a practicing physical therapist, she has seen the benefits that MERP offers to the residents of the local community. "Without MERP, residents may lack the necessary medical equipment following a surgical intervention or a medical issue. Not only does the program serve local residents, it also makes a positive environmental impact by preventing medical equipment from being unnecessarily discarded. Our students are grateful for the wonderful community service opportunity and will be able to share information about the program with the patients they care for in the future."

Adam Nowland, the Foundation's Director, says MERP is grateful for the support. "Students from Penn State Shenango have been volunteering to help at MERP for years, and our team is always so excited to have them help out. There's never a shortage of work to do, so every eager volunteer is an asset to our work. We are extremely thankful that each of these students, and Gizelle, gave their time and energy to serving our community in such a meaningful way."

The Foundation and MERP offer their thanks to each of the students who volunteered: Nick Rodocoy, Garrett Thumm, Melissa Demattio, Brandon Matlock, Morgan Orr, Crystal Sponsler, Emily Gordon, Grace Moore, Patrick Connacher, Linda-Kay Zoky, Alaina Donadio, Courtney Patterson, Sean Stephens, Gianna Cicchillo, Ryan Gordon, Ryan Kocial, Ryan Ford, Malia Baney, Sydney Ward, Katelyn Johnson, Kaiden Roberts, Emily Dick, Garret Smith, Ryan Kurtz, Kelly Green, Amber Sefton, Cailey Connelly, Gizelle Dean (*Program Director*)



UPMC Jameson hosts Annual Robotics Day

The UPMC Jameson Health Care Foundation was proud to support a cross-departmental team of healthcare professionals at UPMC Jameson on Wednesday, October 30th as they hosted the 3rd Annual Robotics Day. The hospital welcomed more than 300 students from 13 different schools in Lawrence and Mercer County for a behind-the-scenes look at a hospital's daily operations, including the surgical robots in use at UPMC Jameson.

During their day at the hospital, students had the opportunity to interact with a variety of healthcare professionals across a number of hospital disciplines, including respiratory care, imaging, nursing, infomatics, anesthesia, surgery, human resources, and infection prevention, among others. Participants were given a chance to tour an operating room, interact with equipment used by surgical and patient care teams, and learn about potential career opportunities in a hospital setting.

This year's event was planned and hosted by a group of approximately 40 volunteers from across the hospital. "UPMC Jameson is part of our bigger community," said Pam DeVincentis, Unit Director, Peri-Anesthesia at UPMC Jameson. "The goal of Robotics Day is to open our doors to local students to engage them by showing them some of what happens in the medical world. We want to empower them to explore, choose and ultimately succeed in our community as future healthcare workers."

UPMC Jameson hosts several surgical robots used for surgical procedures performed in Lawrence County, including the da Vinci Surgical System and the Mako Robotic Arm-Assisted surgical robot. Students were given the opportunity not only to hear from the surgical teams who utilize the equipment, but also to experience the robots with a hands-on demonstration that provided a surgeons-eye view of a mock surgical procedure.

continued...



Robotics Day (continued)

Students were also able to see the hospital's Victoria Doll childbirth simulator, a cutting-edge training device used to train labor and delivery healthcare professionals to handle a variety of childbirth scenarios and ailments.

A new addition to this year's Robotics Day was the opportunity for students to try the hospital's new virtual reality nursing training system, which utilizes headsets and specialized software from SimX to place students in a virtual hospital room to train them in a variety of routine and emergency scenarios. This system is the first virtual reality system in use for training within the UPMC system and was provided for the hospital by a grant from the UPMC Jameson Foundation and the Caroline Fredricka Holdship Charitable Trust.

"My favorite part of Robotics Day is to see the students from our local communities coming into our facility, many of them without a point of reference for all of the career opportunities in healthcare that they could pursue," said Michele Albaugh, a Nurse Educator at Jameson who provides training through the VR system.

"Throughout the day they get to engage with a wide variety of healthcare professionals that are experts in their field, and it's exciting to me to know that I could see some of these same students back wearing a UPMC name badge in five to ten years because we ignited a spark in them at this event."

Students had the chance to talk to UPMC Jameson's Human Resources team to learn more about hospital career paths, as well as representatives from the UPMC Jameson School of Nursing in New Castle. In addition to giving students a look at how a hospital operates, Robotics Day seeks to excite and engage future healthcare professionals - some of whom may someday come back to work at Jameson.





Congratulations Scholarship Recipients

The UPMC Horizon Foundation is proud to celebrate the 2024 recipients of both the Dr. Edgardo Lob Memorial Cancer Care Fund Scholarship and the Kirk L. Works, M.D. Memorial Scholarship, which support Mercer County high school graduates pursuing higher education in healthcare-related fields. These scholarships recognize the exceptional achievements of local students and are made possible through the generous support of donors dedicated to improving healthcare education.



Abigail Gardner (pictured left), a 2024 graduate of Hickory High School, was the inaugural recipient of the Dr. Edgardo Lob Memorial Cancer Care Fund Scholarship. Abigail is attending John Carroll University to study biomedical physics with a pre-med focus. This scholarship, awarded through the Lob Fund, provides a \$2,000 renewable award to students like Abigail who are committed to careers in healthcare.

In addition, Abigail is also one of the recipients of the Kirk L. Works, M.D. Memorial Scholarship, alongside Nolan Lapikas (pictured right) and Alexandra Petrochko. Nolan, a Sharpsville High School graduate, attends Westminster College while studying biology with a pre-med focus. Alexandra, a Hickory High School graduate, is attending Duquesne University and is pursuing a degree in biochemistry with a pre-med focus. Each recipient of the Kirk L. Works, M.D. Memorial Scholarship was selected from a highly competitive pool of applicants and received a \$1,000 scholarship.



We extend our continuing congratulations to Abigail, Nolan, and Alexandra for their dedication to furthering their education in the medical field. Thanks is offered to the volunteers who served on our scholarship selection committees. Finally, we extend our deep appreciation to all of the donors who make these scholarships possible and who continue to support the next generation of healthcare professionals.

To learn more about these scholarships and how you can support students like Abigail, Nolan and Alexandra, please visit the Foundations' website at upmchorizonfoundation.org/scholarships



2nd Annual 5k raises over \$10,000

On August 10th, 2024, over 150 race participants, volunteers, and supporters came together to support community health during the Foundation's 2nd Annual 5K event at Buhl Park. While some participants enjoyed the more relaxed atmosphere of the one-mile walk, plenty of competitors ran in the 5K, pushing themselves to set personal records.

We applaud each and every walker and runner for their dedication to participating in a healthy community event, with congratulations to our winners. Marcos Cruvinel set the first place overall and in the men's event with an impressive time of 19:34, and Nicolette DeVincentis claimed the top spot in the women's competition with a time of 22:45. Joseph Friedl and John Erdesky III claimed the second and third places in the men's competition, and Aisling Brink and Amanda Hanson took second and third in the women's competition.



Thanks to the generosity of our participants, sponsors and volunteers, the Foundation raised over \$10,000 in support of vital hospital and community health initiatives. These funds will go directly towards programs that improve access to healthcare and promote healthy living throughout our region. The Foundations thank the 5K committee which helped organize this year's event, including co-chairs Adam Shrawder and Scott Graubard.



Stay tuned for information about next year's 5K!



Virtual Reality Trains Nurses

Thanks to grant funding provided by the UPMC Jameson Foundation and the Caroline Fredricka Holdship Charitable Trust, UPMC Jameson's Nursing Education Department has access to cutting edge technology for use in training local nurses. UPMC Jameson and UPMC Horizon are the first hospitals within UPMC to be able to utilize virtual reality devices, which can be used to place local nurses in a variety of scenarios designed to test and improve their patient care skills.



Making use of Meta VR headsets and specialized hospital training software by SimX, the system lets multiple nurses at multiple locations wear the technology to be placed in the same virtual "hospital". Users see hospital rooms, equipment, patients, family members and other users in a computer-generated scene, and can move around and interact with the virtual medical tools and people present. Education staff can use computers to "see" what their students are seeing, and also change the parameters of the scenario in real time.



Scenario options range from routine to emergency situations. Users can listen to a patient's heartbeat, administer medication, take phone calls from virtual doctors or pharmacies, or interact with a patient's family members, who may be worried or upset. With the options available to educators, they can transform a routine examination into an emergency, training staff to react quickly and effectively to situations they might see in a hospital setting.

"The system provides realistic patient care experiences for nurses by placing them in a virtual space that looks and functions similarly to that of a hospital," says Michele Albaugh, a Nurse Educator at UPMC Jameson who oversees training using the system. "It's particularly useful since it requires them to practice critical thinking skills by putting them directly into a scenario, rather than just having them read a book or hear a lecture about that scenario."

VR training programs expand options for training nurses and healthcare professionals beyond traditional lectures, mannequin practice, and lab sessions. The SimX system allows Jameson's nurse educators to easily transport training between UPMC's three local hospitals or other locations, enabling staff to join the same virtual "room" from different physical sites. Educators can remotely observe students' actions by streaming scenes to other computers.



Virtual Reality Trains Nurses (*continued*)

UPMC Jameson's nurse educators are collaborating with UPMC Children's Hospital to provide training to local nurse residents on how to treat pediatric patients in emergency situations. In addition, the VR system can be used to provide other skills, such as team training for cardiac arrest events, impacting a large cross-section of UPMC Jameson's various healthcare disciplines

The Foundation offers thanks to the Caroline Fredricka Holdship Charitable Trust and all the donors who helped make this project successful.

2024 Cancer Survivor's Celebration

On Sunday, October 27th, the Dr. Edgardo Lob Memorial Cancer Care Fund, part of the UPMC Horizon Foundation, hosted its 2024 Cancer Survivor's Celebration at the Hickory VFW in Hermitage, PA. More than 150 survivors, guests and volunteers attended the luncheon, which was organized by a committee of UPMC Horizon - Hillman staff and community members.



The event featured a keynote speaker, Emily Papamarkos, with special remarks from Dr. W. Eric Spielvogle. Attendees had the opportunity to engage in several activities, including a Paint by Number program hosted by Melissa Jan Painter and Liz Mitchell from Eli Lilly and Company, a visit from Elvis the therapy dog and Peggy Sheehan, his owner, and a nutrition presentation provided by Lena Aiken, MS, RD, LDN. The blessing was provided by the Reverend Scott Graubard, UPMC Horizon and Jameson's chaplain, and the featured musical guests were Jack Lindey and the Greenville High School Steel Drum Band.

The Foundation thanks the volunteers, donors and supporters who helped make the 2024 Cancer Survivor's Celebration a success.

To learn more about the Dr. Edgardo Lob Fund and the patients it supports, or to make a donation to support the Fund's efforts to care for local patients, please visit the Foundation's website at upmchorizonfoundation.org/lob



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Stethoscopes for Students

Support the next generation of nurses.

A rite of passage for every nursing student is when they acquire their first stethoscope, and this year the UPMC Jameson Health Care Foundation is asking for your help to provide them for all second semester students at the UPMC Jameson School of Nursing. For every \$50 donated, a stethoscope will be provided to a nursing student, in the donor's name. You can donate as many stethoscopes as you'd like - just choose how many times you'd like to give. Stethoscopes will be presented in January at the UPMC Jameson School of Nursing Stethoscope Ceremony and donations must be received by November 30th.

What's more, the impact of your gift will be doubled! Thanks for a generous commitment from Frank and Judy Mindicino, every stethoscope provided by the Foundation through the your generosity will be matched, dollar for dollar, by a gift to the Foundation's School of Nursing Support Fund!

Please note that your donation cannot be directed to support a specific student at the School of Nursing. All contributions will benefit the Foundation's School of Nursing Support Fund.

If you'd like to contribute to this fundraiser, please visit upmchorizonfoundation.org/stethoscopes

If you'd like to give via check or payroll deduction, please contact Kelly Haux at hauxkj@upmc.edu for more information!