THE ART OF HEALING

Meet three Shepherd Center patients who discovered, or recovered, a love for art through their rehabilitation.

ALSO INSIDE

HOW ART THERAPY SUPPORTS REHABILITATION GOALS | ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY HELPS PATIENT RETURN TO PIANO | NEW MURAL ADDS MESSAGE OF HOPE AT SHEPHERD CENTER
Dear Readers,

Art – no matter what form it takes – is often the perfect thing to allow us to pause and appreciate the beauty around us in this fast-paced world. In this issue of Spinal Column, we dedicate our pages to the healing power of art and how the expression of creativity can be transformative in peoples’ lives. Shepherd Center programs like recreation therapy, of which our art therapy program is a part, make a huge difference in our patients’ rehabilitation and allow them to discover or get back to the activities that they love. Because of our generous donors, we offer more than 20 vital services to our patients and families to meet any need and interest they might have.

On page 6, we feature three patients who found art and art therapy at Shepherd Center instrumental in their rehabilitation. They share how they use art as an outlet for anxiety, creativity, and healing. Whether they were artists before coming to Shepherd or discovered a new passion, I hope their stories inspire you to look at the outlets in your life that lead to self-expression and joy.

You will meet Clevance Weekes, whose love of art in the form of playing piano led our Assistive Technology Center and therapy team to create an innovative solution for him using a 3D printer. Read more about that on page 14.

Finally, we share how Shepherd Center has created a place where art can flourish by featuring an eclectic mix of pieces throughout our hospital. Shepherd Co-founder Alana Shepherd explains why she makes art a priority on page 20. You’ll also get a sneak peek at a new mural in the Livingston Gym that Art Specialist Alex Chukabarah is working on with our patients and staff on page 18.

Best wishes for a beautiful and safe summer.

Enjoy,

Sarah Morrison, PT, MBA, MHA
Chief Executive Officer of Shepherd Center
Bradford Ladd converted a room in the back of his house in Mobile, Alabama, into a studio in 2018, six months after he had a stroke.

Photo by Chad Riley

Gifts of Generosity
If you would like to make a gift to support the work you have read about, please contact Sarah L. Balts at the Shepherd Center Foundation at 404-350-7305 or visit shepherd.org.
On April 27, 2022, Shepherd Center announced a $50 million capital grant from The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation. The grant will allow Shepherd Center to double its family housing capacity. This benefit will enable more families and caregivers to be close by as their loved ones participate in rehabilitation for spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, multiple sclerosis, and other neurological conditions— a critical care difference that positively impacts patient outcomes and lives after discharge.

The grant will support the construction of a new family housing building to be named in Arthur M. Blank’s honor, located at 1860 Peachtree Road in Atlanta. The expansion will add approximately 160 housing units, and construction will begin this fall.

“Arthur has always believed in the importance of our family-centered approach to rehabilitative care,” says Alana Shepherd, Shepherd Center co-founder and chairman of the board. “With The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation’s generous support of our programs like recreation therapy and the SHARE Military Initiative, he has allowed countless patients to pursue what is possible. With this investment in our family housing program, Shepherd can help restore the lives of even more who seek our care from around the world.”

The generous grant is a direct extension of Blank’s belief that patients can live more fulfilling lives when their hearts and minds are cared for alongside their illnesses and injuries. Family involvement and participation are a proven part of that equation.

“Throughout Shepherd’s more than 46 years of experience, we’ve consistently witnessed how integral families are in the rehabilitation process,” says Sarah Morrison, PT, MBA, MHA, Shepherd Center CEO. “With the expansion of our housing program, we will reduce the financial and emotional burden on our patients’ families so they can focus on learning how to support their loved ones and each other through rehabilitation and as they return to their communities.”

Scan the QR code with your phone to watch a short video about the expansion.
Shepherd Center’s Vice President of Research and Innovation Named to Georgia Research Alliance Board of Trustees

Earlier this year, Deborah Backus, PT, Ph.D., FACRM, vice president of research and innovation at Shepherd Center, joined the board of trustees for the Georgia Research Alliance (GRA). This non-profit organization brings together Georgia’s research universities, business community, and state government to create opportunities to grow Georgia’s economy through scientific discovery.

As a grant-funded researcher, physical therapist, and educator, Dr. Backus has more than 35 years of experience in the neurorehabilitation field.

“I am honored to serve on the Board of Trustees for the Georgia Research Alliance,” Backus said. “GRA has been instrumental in establishing Georgia as a center of discovery and invention, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to further bolster research, science, and innovation in Georgia and beyond.”

Shepherd Center Grateful Patient Program Launches

In an effort to connect with patients in a new way, Shepherd Center launched its Grateful Patient Program in March 2022. Past patients and their families now have an additional opportunity to stay engaged with Shepherd and give back in a meaningful way to continue advancing the hospital’s mission to rebuild patients’ lives with hope, independence, and dignity. In recognition of Doctors’ Day on March 30, Grateful Patient donors generously gave to Shepherd Center in the name of the doctors who have made a difference in their lives. Additional opportunities to connect, share stories, and give back will be available throughout the year. If you are interested in learning more, email gratitude@shepherd.org.

Eula C. and Andrew C. Carlos Multiple Sclerosis Rehabilitation and Wellness Program Moves into New Location

Effective February 15, 2022, the Eula C. and Andrew C. Carlos Multiple Sclerosis Rehabilitation and Wellness Program at Shepherd Center officially relocated to its expanded location on the plaza level of the Woodruff Family Residence Center on the main campus of Shepherd Center.

This new location allows Shepherd Center to provide care to more patients in a modern space fitting of the variety of rehabilitative treatment options offered to improve wellness for patients diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) and related conditions. The MS Wellness Program teaches physical and psychosocial health and wellbeing to people living with MS. Under the guidance of an exercise physiologist, this comprehensive program teaches appropriate exercises based on physical abilities and promotes self-care. Learn more at shepherd.org/ms.
How can art impact the practice of healthcare? In rehabilitation, the use of the arts is typically associated with recreational therapy, in which individuals engage in the visual arts, music, dance, expressive writing, and more to improve function and psychological wellbeing. But now, there is heightened interest about how to incorporate art history into training programs for rehabilitation professionals. When rehabilitation professionals understand the personal experiences of people with disabilities using visual examples of art throughout history, they can be more effective practitioners.

George “Brick” Johnstone, Ph.D., ABPP, The O. Wayne Rollins Director of Brain Injury Research at Shepherd Center, partnered with his colleagues to research this topic and propose ways this type of training can be integrated into practice. In their article titled “Art History as a Resource for Understanding Social Bias in Disability,” published in The Journal of Humanities in Rehabilitation, they found that understanding of the human side of chronic disabilities can help clinicians have increased communication, empathy, and compassion.

“There is increased recognition that rehabilitation professionals are well trained in knowledge and facts regarding disabilities, but that there are significant limitations in how we are trained to understand the personal experience of the individuals we serve, and particularly how they continue to be misperceived and mistreated,” Dr. Johnstone says. “It was our hope that this article could show how art is one of the most effective ways to understand this.”

Throughout the ages, art has been a powerful tool for communicating and understanding the world, including how people with disabilities were perceived. There are many examples, spanning from primarily negative to positive modern-day examples that continue to evolve.

In one example, Dr. Johnstone and his colleagues cite that while people with physical disabilities were often depicted in a negative light in paintings during the 18th century, in contrast, the ancient Egyptians showed people using compensatory devices like a cane to assist with walking.

“As an art therapist, my day-to-day role is using art to help patients heal through their current experiences in rehabilitation,” says Alexandra Chukabarah, MS, arts specialist at Shepherd Center and co-author of the article. “Working on this article allowed me to share a different side of art that highlights the experience of people with disabilities through the ages. It’s exciting to see art used in this way to educate and inform healthcare professionals.”

Art history can be incorporated into official training materials in a variety of ways. For example, rehabilitation professionals and students can review and discuss the visual arts relating to disability in existing journal clubs and didactics. Learning about and discussing these topics can give practitioners the opportunity to reflect on their own biases (conscious and unconscious), ultimately building awareness and understanding of the populations they serve.

As the article states: “Changing attitudes and beliefs, however, is central to improving the lives of people with disabilities given that prejudicial and exclusionary social practices are believed to be greater barriers to social participation than specific mental, physical, or sensory impairments.”

This article serves as a summary. To read the full article, visit The Journal of Humanities in Rehabilitation website by scanning the QR code.
Feeding Mind, Body, and Soul

Alexandra Chukabarah, MS, arts specialist at Shepherd Center, explains how art therapy helps patients reach their goals.

BY DAMIANA ALVERSON

Q: How long have you worked at Shepherd Center?
I have been an arts specialist at Shepherd for seven years in the Recreation Therapy Department. I work with my colleagues to tailor treatment interventions for each patient I see to meet their needs and goals.

Q: How did you know you wanted to do this as a career?
I initially got into art during high school. I took a dark room photography class and noticed how it helped me with my own anxieties. While volunteering at a VA medical center, I saw someone with quadriplegia painting using a brush in his mouth for the first time. Helping him do that really opened my mind – it was amazing to see how creating art pieces gave the veterans such a sense of accomplishment. That experience inspired me to pursue my master’s in art therapy and work at Shepherd Center!

Q: What types of patients do you see?
I see patients across Shepherd Center’s programs including spinal cord injury, brain injury, the Comprehensive Rehabilitation Unit, SHARE Military Initiative, and outpatient programs. I’ve also had the opportunity to lead art clinics in the community.

Q: Why is art therapy beneficial to patients?
It’s beneficial in a lot of different ways:

- Patients work toward their physical and functional goals. For example, for a patient with quadriplegia, we work on strengthening the upper body and improving fine motor skills through activities like painting, photography, and working with clay. For patients with cognitive goals, we can work on sequencing where we think through what steps are required to complete a task, like painting a ceramic mug. These activities give the person an opportunity to apply what they are learning in therapy to something concrete.

- It helps patients find something meaningful to do. The process of creating something from nothing in art can be really empowering. Often, a patient will come to me thinking they can’t do something, like painting a picture. After I show them a couple of tips, they surprise themselves with what they can accomplish and then feel encouraged to try other things, whether that’s art or something totally different.

- It provides a moment of relaxation in my patients’ days. After a busy therapy day, many people tell me that coming down to a creative and quiet space is a chance for them to re-center themselves.

Q: What do you love most about your job?
I love spending time with my patients and getting to know them as people. As much as I give to them, they give back to me. Being able to introduce them to this creative process and watch that unfold in each of their unique, beautiful ways is so rewarding. It feeds my soul.

INTERESTING FACTS

EDUCATION
- Georgia State University
  Bachelor’s degree in Art and Art History
- Queen Margaret University
  Master’s degree in Art Psychotherapy

FUN FACTS
- Alex attended a two-year master’s program in Scotland.
- She has a dog named Alfie who she says is the sweetest Pitbull you’ll ever meet.
- Alex started playing the ukulele last year.

PHOTOS BY JOANN VITELLI

1. Alexandra Chukabarah has worked at Shepherd Center for 7 years. 2. Alexandra uses watercolor painting to work on grip and dexterity with Dr. Thomas Younker.

More online at news.shepherd.org
THE ART OF HEALING

MEET THREE SHEPHERD CENTER PATIENTS WHO DISCOVERED, OR RECOVERED, A LOVE FOR ART THROUGH THEIR REHABILITATION

BY PHILLIP JORDAN
1. Theresa and her service dog Oscar walk along Solomon’s Island Boardwalk on a windy day. Oscar also accompanied Theresa while she was a client in Shepherd Center’s SHARE Military Initiative. 2. Theresa places her piece onto a shelf where it can dry and harden. 3. Theresa opens the clay to form a bowl. 4 and 5. These bowls are the first pottery pieces Theresa completed during her time in the SHARE Military Initiative. They began her interest in taking formal classes. After graduating from SHARE, she immediately researched pottery studios near her and enrolled in her first formal class at the Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center in Solomons, Maryland.
MUDDY HANDS. A SPINNING WHEEL OF CLAY. AN UNBURDENED MIND.
Capt. Theresa Reer waxes poetic talking about her love for making pottery. But for this U.S. Army veteran and Ohio native, the experience isn’t really about the end product. It’s about the process, about what she experiences while she creates: the art of healing.

“Art has been my saving grace,” she says. “No matter what I’m feeling, I can put that into my art, into my sculptures, or onto paper, and it’s OK. I’m able to channel my emotions and release them in a positive way.”

Theresa, now 48, made her first drawings and paintings during her three years as a patient at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. As a medical specialist officer attached to the 3rd Infantry Division in Afghanistan, Theresa had sustained serious injuries to her left hip and pelvis, and endured subsequent complications. She used a wheelchair for nearly two years as a result.

In addition to her visible injuries, Theresa had also experienced two traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) that led to expressive aphasia — great difficulty in speaking and finding the right words to use when she could speak.

Art often served as her only form of expression. “I didn’t have a voice, literally, to talk through the things I needed to back then,” she says. “There was a lot of stuff I wasn’t dealing with about losing comrades on the battlefield and the survivor’s guilt that comes with that. So, I communicated through art how I was feeling.”

As Theresa progressed, contacts in the Wounded Warrior Project and the Semper Fi & America’s Fund pointed her toward the SHARE Military Initiative at Shepherd Center. Here, specialists addressed concerns related to her TBIs, including vestibular issues affecting her balance and speech. SHARE’s comprehensive rehabilitation program delivers world-class treatment that makes a world of difference, at no cost to veterans, service members, and first responders who, like Theresa, are dealing with post-traumatic stress and may need other mental health services.

“When I look at those now, and I think, ‘Wow, I was in a really dark place,’” she says. “But that was OK for then. That’s what I needed to work through. When I look at my work now, and from my time in the SHARE program, I see pieces that are full of color. They symbolize the progression in my recovery. “Life might look different now, but it can also look brighter.”
Bradford Ladd documented — and accelerated — his recovery from a stroke, thanks to his pencils and a sketch pad.

A FATHER AND A 319-YEAR-OLD HOMETOWN TRADITION.

That’s who, and what, Bradford Ladd credits for his second career of sorts as a painter. For 38 years, Bradford’s father, Edward, designed floats for Mardi Gras parades in the family’s hometown of Mobile, Alabama. When Edward was ready to hand over the creative reins, he asked his sons if either of them would be interested in taking over.

“I said, ‘I think I would,’” Bradford recalls. “I’d always drawn but designing the Mardi Gras floats really got me into painting. My dad had turned it into an art form, and I followed his lead. I’d sketch out the floats and then paint them.”

The bold designs and vibrant colors of Mardi Gras captivated Bradford. Before long, he had branched out to subjects of his own choosing: wildlife, Mobile Bay waterways, and much more. He converted a room in the
back of his house into a studio and began painting almost every day. A commercial real estate broker by trade, painting became Bradford’s release valve.

“What it does is give me some meditation, so to speak,” Bradford says. “When you’re drawing or painting, you unzip a bubble, step inside, and zip it up after you. You forget everything in your own little world. It’s been good for me.”

On July 20, 2018, Bradford’s bubble burst.

He had taken his daughter Campbell, then 16, up to Knoxville, Tennessee, for a regional swim competition. As ever, Bradford had his sketchbook in tow. While sketching one afternoon during the trip, he experienced a stroke. He spent 10 days in Knoxville at Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center, then a month at Shepherd Center with a team of specialists “putting Humpty Dumpty together again,” as Bradford describes it.

The stroke didn’t impair his speech, but it did impact his memory and severely affect the right side of his body — a concerning consequence for a right-handed painter. Physical and occupational therapists at Shepherd Center’s Stroke Rehabilitation Program focused on re-training his body to achieve certain movements that would help him paint once again.

Early on, Bradford’s dad asked if there was anything he needed with him. Bradford requested a sketch pad and pencils. That sketchbook now serves as a historical document, illustrating Bradford’s progress as he recovered from his stroke.

On August 5, Bradford scratched out a house, left-handed. It was a far cry from his true artistic abilities, but it gave him a sense of possibility. A few days later, Bradford tried drawing with his right hand for the first time. He attempted a pair of faces “that looked like a three-year-old did them,” Bradford says. But, again, the exercise motivated him, steeling his resolve.

He poured himself into his therapy, including watercolor art classes through Shepherd Center’s recreational therapy programs. He did yoga there, too.

“I did everything I possibly could to push myself ahead,” Bradford says. “Shepherd Center is great at getting you to keep pushing your limits.”

All along, Bradford kept filling up his sketchbook. Flip the pages, and the drawings get sharper, more detailed by the day. By the end of his stay at Shepherd Center, Bradford’s lines had shed their shakiness, and his characters had once again become recognizable. By December, Bradford painted his first post-injury drawing, adding shades of red, blue, brown, and yellow to a turkey.

“It’s funny, I think my drawings and paintings are better now,” he says. “Before, I always had to have my lines be perfect. Now, my imperfections give it more of an artistic flair.”

Bradford’s once again designing Mobile’s famed floats. And last summer, he completed a series of stylized paintings of fish that are now for sale at the McCoy Outdoor Company in Mobile.

“I’m never gonna get rich off this, but maybe it’ll pay for my paints,” Bradford says with a laugh.
Before his spinal cord injury, the Atlanta resident renovated houses, installed appliances, and drove trucks for a living. The schedule was often grueling, and the hours were long.

To refuel his own tank, Antavious, 32, kept up a passion project, one that allowed him to tap into his creative side.

“I love hip-hop,” he says. “I performed, I recorded, I did it as much as I could. That was my thing.”

The music stopped on the morning of June 13, 2019. Antavious was out on a delivery, driving through Mt. Airy, Georgia, when the brakes in his box truck went out. The truck ran off the road, struck a ditch, and shot down an embankment, coming to a stop on a parallel parkway only after running through a power pole with enough steam to pull the pole right out of the ground.

First responders transported Antavious to Northeast Georgia Medical Center in Gainesville, where he was told he had a C-6-to-C-7 spinal cord injury. About three weeks later, he made it to Shepherd Center, where he
started physical and occupational therapy in the Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program.

“I was pretty down and stressed about what I could do moving forward,” Antavious says. Because of his injury, he is unable to walk and has minimal ability to move his hands and arms.

Antavious credits his case manager, Brandi Milford, and his occupational therapist, Abby Baker, MOT, OTL, CAPS, with helping him look ahead — and for pointing him toward recreational therapy options. Shepherd Center’s recreational therapy programs, which are donor-funded, help patients regain skills and confidence, and discover new interests, too. Antavious learned to play quad rugby, took horticulture classes, and worked out in the ProMotion Fitness Center.

He also signed up for a painting class taught by Shepherd Center Arts Specialist Alexandra Chukabar, MS. Little did he know just how life-changing that decision would be.

“Alex was awesome,” Antavious says. “If you don’t think you can do something, she can bring it out of you. She’s got that skill. If it wasn’t for her, I probably wouldn’t be into art like I am now.”

Painting allowed Antavious to challenge himself physically while healing emotionally.

“It’s therapeutic in both ways,” he says. “Physically, it works my muscles, helps my hands and fingers. Mentally, it’s an escape. Art real quickly gave me a sense of peace. It relieved my stress, increased my focus. It was a new creative outlet for me, beyond music.”

As Antavious continues his physical therapy, he’s sustained his artistry, too. After returning home, one of his first purchases was for canvases, paintbrushes, and paint.

“The more I paint, the more I feel like I can really see a vision for what I’m creating,” Antavious says. “I can sit down, sketch something out, and start painting what I see in my mind.”

His pursuit of art also gives him the confidence to reconsider his future. He’s thinking about art school, where he could combine his longtime love of music and his newfound passion for art. He’s happy his nieces and nephews see the work he’s putting in, too, and the new dreams he’s cultivating.

Antavious also has a secret wish up his sleeve. At Shepherd Center, he recalls that one of the things that motivated him was the artwork in the buildings.

“You look all around, even up at the ceilings while you’re working out, and there are motivational drawings and motivational messages everywhere,” he says. “Those were really touching. They make you want to keep going, keep pushing. To be honest, seeing all those is what made me get into the art classes.

“I’d love to contribute something up on the walls or ceiling at Shepherd Center someday. Help someone else to keep pushing. Inspire them to get in touch with their creative side. Even if you don’t do great at art, trying won’t hurt. And you never know what it might stir inside.”

Art classes at Shepherd Center offered a new outlet for Antavious Morgan and his creativity
LEARNING TO PLAY A NEW TUNE

Thanks to help from Shepherd Center’s Assistive Technology Center and his therapy team, Clevance Weekes returned to playing the piano after sustaining a spinal cord injury.

BY DAMJANA ALVERSON
CLEVANCE WEEKES, 52, HAS MUSIC IN HIS BLOOD. HIS FAMILY ON BOTH SIDES IS INVOLVED IN ECCLESIASTICAL MUSIC, AND HE HAS PLAYED PIANO SINCE HIGH SCHOOL.

So, when his therapy team at Shepherd Center asked him about how important returning to the piano was, the answer was unequivocal: “I told my therapists that if I couldn’t play my piano, I would die. I need to play; it’s part of my life.”

On August 10, 2021, Clevance was driving from his home in Franklin, Georgia, to his job at a plant where he helped make tractors. Every weekday, he left the house before the sun rose and clocked in between 5:45 and 6 a.m. This day was like any other until the unexpected happened.

“My pickup truck rolled over four times and hit a tree,” Clevance says. “To this day, I have no idea exactly what happened. Two weeks of my life, from that morning to the first hospital room I was in, to my operation, are gone.”

In addition to breaking both his shoulders, sustaining injuries to his hips, and having significant wounds, Cvenience also sustained a T-11 spinal cord injury (SCI).

When he arrived at Shepherd Center’s Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program on August 24, his therapy team got to work to help him achieve his goals, including returning to the piano. The team affectionately calls Cvenience by his last name, Weekes.

“While Wekes could lift and drop his foot, he wasn’t able to move his toes or his ankle to press a standard piano pedal. This was frustrating to him because it made a difference in the sound,” says Katie Murphy, CTRS, recreational therapist at Shepherd Center.

Cvenience adds, “When you play the piano, it sings. When I couldn’t press the pedals anymore, I couldn’t make it sing the way I wanted to, and it was devastating.”

Murphy teamed with Cvenience’s physical therapist, Lindsay Brinker, PT, DPT, to use common items around the hospital to craft a makeshift extension that attached to the piano pedal. It allowed Cvenience to use the heel of his foot as he dropped his leg onto the pedal, but it wasn’t sturdy enough, so they turned to rehabilitation engineer, Jared Grier.

Grier works in Shepherd Center’s Assistive Technology Center (ATC). He combines his engineering background and expertise in 3D printing to help Shepherd Center patients.

“Using specialized software, I am able to custom design parts that patients need after I consult with the patient and their therapy team,” Grier says.

In Cvenience’s case, Murphy and Brinker asked for a sustainable solution for the piano pedal extension. After some back-and-forth, Grier figured out he needed a rigid design that wouldn’t flex, long enough to accommodate the way Cvenience’s heel hit the pedal, and a size that could fit different pedals on whichever piano Cvenience was using.

Cvenience will never forget the day he got to play the piano the way he envisioned again using the new device.

“For the first time since my accident, I heard a sustained sound when I pressed the pedals, and I just cried,” he says. “I realized that the piano was no longer taken away from me. The accident took it, but the team at Shepherd gave it back. That for me is life – I dream and compose music.”

Cvenience graduated from Shepherd Center’s outpatient Day Program on January 14, 2022. His wife created a music studio for him at their home, where he’s busy using his 3D-printed pedal adapter to compose music, which he hopes to release in the future. He also looks forward to playing at his church.

“What the team at Shepherd did for me is show me nothing is out of reach,” Cvenience says. “I’ll never say I won’t be able to do this or that anymore. You can do anything – just don’t stop.”
Shepherd Alums: From “I Can’t” to “I Can”

Debbie Riggsby  
ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

The first time Debbie Riggsby tried on a pair of gloves from a company called Gloves for Life, she hated them. She was undergoing rehabilitation at Shepherd Center after sustaining a C-6-7 complete spinal cord injury from a fall down her basement stairs, and a physical therapist handed her a pair. “I didn’t like the way they felt on my hands,” Debbie remembers. “At that point, everything was uncomfortable.”

The therapist persuaded her to give them a try, explaining that they would help her grip, making pushing a wheelchair much easier. Debbie finally agreed and saw what a difference they made. “I was able to push the manual chair, and that was so empowering,” she says. “They also helped with transfers and everyday activities like dressing myself and cooking. I became a regular customer.”

Now Debbie and her husband, Zane, make and sell the very same gloves she once wanted nothing to do with.

Because Debbie ordered several pairs a year, she became close with the owner, Emma Howerton, who had started making the gloves for her son, also a former Shepherd Center patient. In June 2013, Debbie called to make an order and got fateful news. “Emma told me that she planned to retire, and she was either going to sell the company or close it,” Debbie says. “Because we knew how much these gloves can help others, we decided to buy it.”

Zane custom makes every pair of gloves by hand with the goal of giving each customer the best fit possible. Debbie orders the supplies, processes the orders, and helps prepare the orders for shipping.

While the gloves facilitated her mobility and independence, owning the company gave her purpose. After the accident, Debbie couldn’t help Zane with the painting and janitorial services company they have owned since 1995. “I was feeling lost – I wanted to do something,” Debbie says. “This made me feel like I could contribute.”

She also supports people on the other end of the phone, especially those ordering gloves for the first time. “I tell them as a quadriplegic, I am a glove wearer, and these gloves enable me to be as independent as I am,” she says. “And I hear them breathe a sigh of relief. I hate that people need them, but I’m glad we can help make life a little easier for them. It’s very rewarding.”

Debbie Riggsby and her husband own Gloves for Life, a company that custom makes gloves for people who use wheelchairs.

Brent Taylor  
CLAYTON, GEORGIA

For five years, Brent Taylor, 36, served as a corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps. When he was discharged in 2010, he seemed to make a normal transition to civilian life. But then he started noticing that he became easily frustrated and struggled with anger issues. He was confrontational. He had problems with balance, dizziness, and double vision. And most alarming, he was experiencing suicidal thoughts. “I felt like something was wrong with my brain,” he remembers. “I was not myself.”

Three years ago, Brent took a job as a program manager at Camp Southern Ground, an organization that does a summer camp for children and programs for veterans during the rest of the year. As he started to talk to other veterans, he discovered that his symptoms were not unique. Through those conversations, he learned about Shepherd Center’s SHARE Military Initiative, a comprehensive rehabilitation program that delivers world-class treatment at no cost to veterans, service members, and first responders. He was accepted into the program in the summer of 2021.

The SHARE doctors determined that most of Brent’s symptoms – including the personality changes – resulted from a traumatic brain injury (TBI). He now traces that injury back to his days in the Marines when he was working on the range and was hit in the head when the gate of a dump truck swung open. He was knocked unconscious, but he shook off medical help. “It went undiagnosed for more than 10 years,” he says. “It had been a long journey trying to get help.”

At Shepherd Center, he worked on balance, vision correction, frustration tolerance, and ways to improve his sleep. He’s noticed that he no longer snaps at people, and he has better relationships with those he loves, including his wife and daughter.

When he returned to work, he developed a program for veterans that emphasizes emotional wellness. He’s also become more involved in his community, joining a church and finding ways to volunteer. “I am a different person with a new attitude,” he says. “SHARE gave me the confidence to share who I am rather than who I think I should be. It helped me see myself without a negative filter. What they did for me was so impactful.”
Dominic Pedrotty
HUNT VALLEY, MARYLAND

Classes like “CAD of Fluid and Thermo Systems” and “Fluid Flows in Nature” could be challenging for anyone. But they are especially challenging for a person who sustained a brain injury and is dealing with short term memory issues.

Yet, for Dominic Pedrotty, 25, those were the last two classes he needed to complete his mechanical engineering degree from Virginia Tech. And he did it, walking across the stage to receive his diploma on December 17, 2021.

“It wasn’t something I was sure I could accomplish, and it was surreal to finally be done despite everything I had been through,” Dominic says.

What he had been through was three years of recovery and rehabilitation from a devastating car crash.

On May 31, 2018, Dominic – who had just completed his junior year at Virginia Tech – was driving through Tennessee with his older sister when, without warning, he experienced a brain aneurysm. Doctors would later determine the aneurysm burst, which caused Dominic to lose consciousness and cross paths with a semi-truck. The collision killed his sister instantly. Dominic was transferred to Holsten Valley Medical Center in Kingsport, Tennessee, where he spent five weeks.

After leaving the hospital in Tennessee, Dominic transferred to Shepherd Center’s Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program, where he spent five months working on balance, vision and mobility issues, and memory loss, among other physical goals.

Through it all, Dominic never lost sight of returning to Virginia Tech and finishing his degree – he just wasn’t sure it would be possible.

“With my memory issues, I didn’t think I would be able to retain the information necessary to complete the courses,” he says.

But in fall 2019, Dominic returned to school, at first doing much of it remotely. His professors at Virginia Tech accommodated all of his needs. In the last semester, when he needed to be on campus, his parents moved with him to Blacksburg, where the three of them lived in a hotel until graduation.

Now armed with his degree, Dominic is looking toward his future. Though he still hopes to go into the field of agricultural engineering, for now, he is focusing on physical therapy and continuing to make improvements. He’s currently working two days a week at a greenhouse.

“My inspiration stems from the realization that my struggle and my success are for a purpose,” he says. “That I had a goal and a little thing like a brain injury could not stop me.”

Dominic Pedrotty graduated from Virginia Tech in December 2021 after sustaining a brain injury. Photo by Chris Price

Julia Nieves
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Julia Nieves, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in 2014, was looking for a way to deal with the physical and emotional challenges of living with the disease.

She used to sew and draw when she was younger and reconnected with her creative side during the pandemic when she began working with an expressive arts therapist/coach.

“But not only did I need an outlet to express myself, but I also wanted to create more space in my life for fun, laughter, and joy,” says Julia (who pronounces her name HOO-liah).

In the last year, Julia has created paintings, quilts, photographs, and digital art that portray the various MS symptoms she feels, such as vertigo, “wobbliness” when walking, balance issues, and fatigue, all of which impact her daily life. She has even compiled this art onto her website, www.julianievesstudio.com.

“Art has allowed me to make the un-seeable reality of living in my body visible first to myself and then to my family and friends,” Julia says. “Seeing a visual representation of what it feels like to be dizzy and off-balance that existed outside of my body was absolutely liberating for me! I immediately felt less alone.”

Julia says the medium she uses on any given day depends on how she feels. On a “good day” with little fatigue and more energy, she might choose to sew or paint. On other days when she’s not feeling as strong, she usually draws, writes, or takes photos to use later in digital art.

Being able to find solace in art is just another example of Julia’s “can do” attitude.

When she was first diagnosed, a doctor in Raleigh, North Carolina – where she and her family lived at the time - told her that all she could hope for was to slow the “inevitable decline” due to MS. That was not a satisfactory answer for Julia.

“I had a pity party for about a month,” Julia admits. “But then I decided I would not be in a war with my body. I started looking for a doctor who believed things were possible before they were declared impossible.”

She found that in the staff of the Andrew C. Carlos MS Institute at Shepherd Center after she and her family moved to Atlanta in 2016.

“Shepherd Center is a community of compassionate, innovative, and skilled people who believe in and work for miraculous transformation on behalf of the people they serve,” Julia says. “It is an amazing place.”
ANYONE WHO USES THE TRACK IN SHEPHERD CENTER’S LIVINGSTON GYM NOW HAS SOMETHING BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL TO LOOK AT AS A NEW MURAL TRANSFORMS THE SPACE.

Spearheaded by patients in Shepherd’s adolescent program, the mural is more than 100 feet long and flows through all aspects of the space, including the pillars and a portion of the ceiling.

The mural is the brainchild of Shepherd Center Arts Specialist Alexandra Chukabarah, MS, who was looking for a project to do with patients in the adolescent program.

“I thought a mural would be a nice way to engage more people and promote a sense of community,” Chukabarah says, “and a way to add color and vibrancy to a space everyone uses.”

Chukabarah solicited the help of Minna Hong, an artist and former peer support manager at Shepherd Center. Hong was a patient at Shepherd Center in 1999 after sustaining a spinal cord injury in a car accident. The two spent several “Fun Friday” sessions with the adolescents from both the Spinal Cord Injury and Brain Injury Rehabilitation Programs – as they brainstormed ideas of their vision for the wall.

The teenagers wanted every level of injury represented in the mural so that all patients could feel a connection. They also came up with a list of words they wanted to convey in the painting, such as hope, courage, family, sports, friends, school, and love. Under the guidance of Chukabarah and Hong, the group settled on the theme of birds flying in different stages. It is inspired by the poem “Hope Is the Thing With Feathers” by Emily Dickinson.

“The main design is a series of origami birds taking form and taking flight along the wall,” Chukabarah explains. “This design captures the idea of rebuilding...
one’s life and giving form to something new – as seen in the folding of origami – and also in our patients’ unique journeys at Shepherd Center. It also conveys the message we want to capture of the hope that lives at Shepherd.”

For the young people creating the mural, it was more than an art project. It was a way for them to share their hope for the future and leave their mark on Shepherd Center long after leaving the hospital.

“Their words and their vision come through in the mural,” Hong says. “Giving them the space to decide what they wanted to see and what they wanted to share was empowering. They wanted future patients to feel inspired.”

While the adolescents took the lead in painting the mural, Chukabarah arranged it so that other groups of patients, as well as family members and staff, had an opportunity to contribute to the project. Lewis Haney, who works in Shepherd Center’s engineering department, volunteered to prepare the walls before Chukabarah and Hong outlined the shapes of the origami birds with painter’s tape so that those painting could just fill in the shapes. The design was intentionally accessible so that all patients could participate, including those painting with a mouth stick.

The mural is funded by a $2,500 grant from a generous donor and Foundation Trustee, Sherry Abney, and was completed in May.

Although this mural is a special project, Chukabarah regularly offers Shepherd Center patients ways to express their creativity through painting, drawing, pottery, photography, and other mediums as part of the hospital’s art therapy program.

“There is so much healing power in art,” Chukabarah says. “It’s a form of expressing ourselves and can often hold so much more meaning than words.”

Hong, who worked at Shepherd Center for 18 years until her retirement in 2019, agrees.

“Art has been so therapeutic to me,” she says. “It helps me focus and gives me a sense of calm. I hope this project does the same for others. I was honored they asked me to come back and be a part of it.”
When you walk through the halls of Shepherd Center and see the vast collection of art, you may not like everything. But chances are you will like something. And that’s the whole point.

“It’s eclectic on purpose,” says Shepherd Center Co-Founder Alana Shepherd, who has had a hand in almost every piece of art coming into the hospital, knowing where it is located and the story behind it.

Shepherd Center is filled with paintings, sculptures, murals, and photographs. Some have been on the walls or on display since the Shepherd Building opened in 1982. Others have been added over the years. They are by famous artists and local artists. Most of the artwork has been donated – either by the artist or a collector. Some generous donors have commissioned works of art for Shepherd Center.

The art collection started as the vision of Alana Shepherd and Lindsey Hopkins, who was president of Shepherd Center in 1982 when the hospital moved to its current location on Peachtree Road. He and Alana oversaw the collection of art.

“He helped acquire the art, and he had a lot of good ideas,” Alana says. “We have built on that since we’ve started. Sometimes we go to the artists and ask, but mostly they come to us.”

Some of the first art on the walls was a collection of Audubon prints donated by Charles West, a collector of bird prints. With 103 pieces, it’s the biggest display at Shepherd Center. There’s also a collection of folk art donated by well-known collector Bill Arnett and his brother. Jacque Rubel created two miniature rooms displayed in boxes adorning the walls. Artist and former Georgia First Lady, the late Betty Foy Sanders, gave Alana one of her paintings that now hangs in the Callaway Auditorium. Shepherd donor and Atlanta philanthropist Mickey Loudermilk Webb commissioned a series of three murals painted by Georgia artist Henry Barnes on the walls of the cafeteria. There is art in every corner of Shepherd Center – including the Livingston Gym, 40 mounted trophy fish in the pool area, and even high above where patients have painted ceiling tiles.

At the center of the art collection is the desire for patients and families to have something appealing to look at as they roam through Shepherd Center. The art can also serve as a source of inspiration.

“As they wheel and walk around the hospital, we want there to be something that catches their eye,” Alana says. “The pieces won’t appeal to everybody, but they will appeal to somebody.”

While the mix is eclectic, a lot of thought goes into where each piece is placed.

“We’ll put colorful, motivating pieces in the gym, for example,” says Wilma Bunch, vice president of patient experience at Shepherd Center, who also helps oversee the placement, “and more calming, soothing pieces in the acquired brain injury unit.”

The halls and walls of Shepherd Center are filled with an extensive collection of art, providing something for everybody.

**“Eclectic on Purpose”**

**BY SARA BAXTER**

1. One of the pieces in the folk art collection donated by Bill Arnett and his brother. 2. One of the three murals painted by Georgia artist Henry Barnes hangs in Shepherd Center’s cafeteria. 3. Shepherd Center has 103 bird prints from Charles West’s collection of Audubon prints.
4. Original painting by famed folk artist Joe Light.
5. Artist and former Georgia First Lady, the late Betty Foy Sanders gave Alana Shepherd one of her paintings that now hangs in the Callaway Auditorium.
6 & 11. Murals painted by Georgia artist Henry Barnes that hang in Shepherd Center’s cafeteria.
7. Paintings by Henry Barnes on display in the hospital Boardroom.
9. An imaginary map made out of ceramic by Gregor Turk.
10. A piece of art from Shepherd Center’s extensive collection of Audubon prints.

PHOTOS BY JOANN VITELLI
Some of Alana’s favorites include a large 10-foot painting done by Atlanta artist Steve Penley and an imaginary map made out of ceramic by Gregor Turk. There is also work by Howard Finster and Mose Tolliver.

The art even extends outside the doors of Shepherd Center. At the entrance to the building, there is a sculpture of a former patient and athlete Terry Lee throwing a javelin that was commissioned by former board member Jim Caswell. The sculpture was created by artist Ed Dwight – who did the sculptures of Hank Aaron and Phil Niekro that were fixtures at Turner Field – and serves as an inspiration to patients as they drive up to Shepherd Center’s doors. The gardens are also filled with fountains, sculptures, and other pieces of art that patients and families can enjoy while outside.

“I hope the art sets a healing tone,” Alana says. “It certainly makes the hospital look less like a hospital. People are always taking time to look at the art, which is what we want them to do.”

1. This sculpture of former patient and athlete Terry Lee throwing a javelin can be seen at the entrance to Shepherd Center. It was created by artist Ed Dwight.
2. “Waters of Life” by sculptor David Sampson.
3. One of two miniature rooms displayed in boxes adorning the walls that Jacque Rubel created.
4. “With Compassion He Listens to All” by sculptor Victor Salmones.
5. A large 10-foot painting by Atlanta artist Steve Penley now hangs in the first floor of the hospital.
6. Patients have painted ceiling tiles throughout the hospital, as can be seen here.
The countdown to the 2022 Legendary Party has begun! On March 30, dozens of Shepherd Center supporters, board members, and staff gathered at the Cherokee Town and Country Club in Atlanta’s Buckhead neighborhood to get a preview of this year’s Legendary Party.

Elaine Carlos and daughters Kari and Angela are serving as chairs of this year’s gala benefit – which will take place on November 5 at Flourish – and Anne and Andrew Worrell are the chairs-elect. Elaine Carlos revealed this year’s theme will be The Legendary Party: Garden of Hope.

Guests at the kickoff event enjoyed music from the band Lilac Wine. Event company Legendary Events – who will also cater and host The Legendary Party – provided the décor.

Shepherd Center CEO Sarah Morrison, PT, MBA, MHA, announced to the partygoers that proceeds from this year’s gala event, Shepherd Center’s largest fundraiser, will go to the Andrew C. Carlos Multiple Sclerosis Institute. The three party co-chairs announced that Ben Thrower, M.D., medical director of the MS Institute, will be this year’s honoree.

To illustrate the impact of the MS Institute, attendees heard the compelling story of MS patient Brooks Brackett, who spoke about her experience of receiving treatment at Shepherd Center. She was accompanied by her husband, Mark, daughters Jordan and Maggie, and son-in-law Billy Norman.

Jamie Shepherd, MBA, MHA, president and chief operating officer at Shepherd Center, closed out the event by speaking about Dr. Thrower’s contributions to the MS Institute and Shepherd Center since he joined the staff in 2001.

Held annually on the first Saturday in November, The Legendary Party has raised more than $41 million for Shepherd Center’s patient care programs over the past 30 years. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Erica Spurling at Erica.Spurling@Shepherd.org.
All it took was seeing Ben Throver, M.D., speak at a conference on multiple sclerosis (MS) in 2008 to convince Carol Cetrino, who had been struggling with her MS symptoms since her diagnosis in 1982, to fly to Atlanta and pay a visit to the Andrew C. Carlos MS Institute at Shepherd Center.

“When I met with him, he said, ‘I know we can help you,’” remembers Carol, who at the time was walking with a cane due to balance and mobility issues and also had what she calls “brain fog.” She was depressed, fatigued, and feeling desperate. She could no longer work because of the severity of her symptoms.

Thanks to that meeting, she gained the one thing she thought she’d lost — hope.

Carol moved from New Jersey to Atlanta and began receiving treatment at the MS Institute. Over the years, she has made remarkable improvement, and she no
longer has relapses. She’s also been able to stop taking most of her medications.

Carol is just one of the thousands of MS patients who have received treatment — and hope — at the Andrew C. Carlos MS Institute. Another is John Carlos, who has been a patient at the Institute — named for his father — for the last 15 years.

“They have helped him so much,” says his wife, Elaine, who, along with daughters Kari and Angela, is chairing the 2022 Legendary Party. The funds raised from Shepherd Center’s largest fundraiser will go to the Andrew C. Carlos MS Institute. Dr. Thrower, who serves as the medical director of the MS Institute, is this year’s honoree.

“We are thrilled he is being honored,” Elaine says. “He is so deserving. He treats all patients with competence, kindness, and compassion. We have been so grateful to Dr. Thrower.”

Since taking the helm in 2001, Dr. Thrower has helped the program grow in terms of the services they offer patients, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling, and a comprehensive wellness program. There is also a research department that works to improve clinical outcomes and the quality of life for people with multiple sclerosis.

“I truly believe ours is one of the most comprehensive programs in the country,” Dr. Thrower says. “We have all the pieces, and we have them integrated and coordinated in a team effort. That’s what sets us apart. I also believe that all the things that make our program special would be absolutely impossible without the kindness of the donors who fund us.”

Staff at the MS Institute don’t want patients to face any financial barriers to receiving care, which can be a challenge considering that not everything is covered by insurance. Fortunately, the Patient Assistance Fund (PAF), funded by generous donors, can help patients cover the cost of things they may not be able to afford, such as equipment, co-pays, and some medications. The PAF can also help with non-medical expenses, like transportation to and from Shepherd Center, rent, and utilities.

“A lot of MS patients are on a fixed income because they can no longer work and have to go on disability,” says Lisa Lundy, BSHS, CCM, MS clinic case manager. “This fund gives them a little boost for things they can’t afford. It is so nice that we can help our patients in this way. They are so grateful, and it makes such a difference in their lives.”

One of the fund’s significant contributors is Carol Cetrino, who knows firsthand how much treatment can cost and how much patients need that treatment. Through a family fund named for her mother, the Ann Allen Cetrino Foundation, Carol and her family have donated more than $600,000 to the MS Institute.

“My family saw the dramatic improvement in me and wanted to help other patients as well,” Carol says. “MS is an expensive disease to have, mainly because of its longevity. It can be a huge financial burden.”

On November 5, 2022, people will gather for another Legendary Party and celebrate the MS Institute and the work of Dr. Thrower.

“I feel honored and humbled to be the honoree and to work at Shepherd Center,” he says. “What the Shepherd family has done for various patient populations in the country is unique. It is a special place.”

Elaine Carlos agrees.

“The Legendary Party is an evening to celebrate all that Shepherd Center does, and you see it when you walk through the doors. All the money raised is used for good and allows the hospital to continue to accomplish great things.”

“I believe that all the things that make our program special would be absolutely impossible without the kindness of the donors who fund us.”

1. Ben Thrower, M.D., is medical director of the Andrew C. Carlos MS Institute at Shepherd Center. Photo by Louie Favorite. 2. Carol Cetrino (left) is one of the thousands of MS patients who have received treatment at Shepherd Center. Dr. Thrower (right) became medical director of the MS Institute in 2001. Photo by Phil Skinner.
SHEPHERD CENTER WELCOMES

New Members to Foundation Board of Trustees

This year, Shepherd Center welcomed eight new members to our Foundation Board of Trustees. In this capacity, these individuals will set development policy and act as the major fundraising entity for Shepherd Center. Each new member has a history of involvement with Shepherd Center and commitment to supporting its mission.

ANDREW ALIAS
Board of Trustees, Chairman
Vice President, REPAY
(Realtime Electronic Payments)

T. BRAD COURTS
Co-founder, GreenCapRE
and Vice President,
Atlanta Investment Co.

DAVID K. DABBIERE
Board Member and
Legal Advisor,
OneTrust

DR. KEITH M. DOCKERY
Otolaryngologist and
Founder of Buckhead Ear,
Nose, & Throat

KARI CARLOS DUNN
Vice President,
Republic National
Distributing

DEBORAH A. HOWARD
Managing Director of
Wealth Management,
Merrill Lynch

ELIZABETH W. MORRIS
Trustee,
White Family Foundation

RICHARD “BUCK” N. WOODRUFF
Owner,
The Honda Carland Group

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS Whose Terms Ended This Year.

Susan Hawkins,
former Chair,
Board of Trustees

Hunter Amos
Martin Isenberg
Kim Rowell

Stan Sands
Price Woodward
A Legendary Event to Remember

The 2021 Legendary Party celebrated Shepherd Center’s community of supporters in a memorable evening gala

BY ERICA SPURLING

The 2021 Legendary Party, the Legend of the Looking Glass, was a beautiful night reflecting on Shepherd Center’s rich history while envisioning its bright future. The 32nd annual gala was held on Saturday, November 6, 2021, at Flourish, the Buckhead venue of Legendary Events, where guests entered the courtyard to acrobatic mirror dancers, crystals overhead, and a beautiful ice bar.

The evening honored Shepherd Center Medical Director Emeritus David Apple, M.D., or Dr. Legendary as others affectionately referred to him. Dr. Apple received a roaring ovation from the crowd after the chair of the event, Melinda Dabbiere, thanked him for all
the inspiring work he has done for Shepherd Center since its founding in 1975. Scott Tucker, MDiv, associate pastor at Peachtree Presbyterian Church and dear friend of the Dabbiere family, introduced the speakers and gave the invocation.

The event raised a record-breaking $14.6 million, including a very generous $12.4 million legacy gift from the estate of Jane Woodruff, a long-time donor and friend of the Center and the Shepherd family. Proceeds from the evening will support Shepherd Center’s Delores Ann and Goodloe Yancey Family Housing Program, which provides housing for family members who live more than 60 miles from the hospital to be close by during their loved one’s journey of recovery and rehabilitation.

Guests dined in the beautiful ballroom with a stunning canopy of blue flowers, including faux blue hydrangeas, blue stock, and blue wisteria over the dance floor. The décor included blue sequins, champagne Cotier, and navy pleated linens, with centerpieces that included purple and delft blue vanda orchids, gladiolas, and hydrangeas. Dinner included a grilled ratatouille salad, and classic beef bourguignon served with shallot mashed potatoes, carrots, and mushrooms. Dessert included tarte au citron plated with burnt meringue,
fresh strawberries, vanilla bean chantilly, and tuile décor, with gold-dusted blackberries.

After dinner, guests filled the dance floor and danced the night away to the live band Party Nation. Shepherd Center’s next generation of supporters arrived for the Legendary Late Night afterparty, where guests enjoyed light bites and a dessert buffet. Their entertainment included a karaoke band, Rock Mayhem, and a 360-video booth from Shutterbooth Atlanta.

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Scott & Betsy Akers
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Andee’s Army Child Brain & Spinal Cord Foundation
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Cynthia Arrendale
Albert and Diane M. Ashkouti
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First Horizon Foundation
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Susan and Scott Hawkins
HD Supply
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Estate of Jane Woodruff
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Jackson Spalding

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Ms. Julie H. Shepherd
Becca and Clyde Shepherd
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Mr. and Mrs. Ronald E. Stewart
Mr. John Weitnauer, Jr.
Betsy & Mark West
Wilmington Trust
Jay and Ann Wolverton
Dr. Michael Yochelson & Mr. Kevin Clift
Deceased friends of Shepherd Center are listed first in bold print followed by the names of those making gifts in their memory. This list reflects gifts made to Shepherd Center between October 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021.

Josh Abston
Mr. and Mrs. Dale Tuttle
Madeline Adams
Mrs. William C. Hatcher
Laura and Karl Anschutz
Ms. Esther L. Abisamra
Ms. Hope Abisamra
Philip Assey
Ms. Kristin West
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Richard Colby
Anonymous
Steven Collins
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Caro
Ms. Mary Elbert
Ms. Teresa Lawson
Ms. Laura Sporny
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Wright

On April 22, Shepherd Center hosted prom night for its adolescent patients.
Becca Harrell

Shepherd Center was saddened by the passing of Becca Harrell on December 7, 2021. Becca was a Founding Life Member of the Shepherd Center Auxiliary, and she and her husband Rudy were faithful donors to a variety of Shepherd Center programs since 1984.

Becca served as a member of Shepherd Center’s Advisory Board for decades and later served as an Emeriti Member of the Foundation’s Advisory Board. Becca was an advocate for the Center in Atlanta and helped advise the Center on enhancements to the entrance of Shepherd Pathways to add comfort and convenience for the patients and caregivers.

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Dr. and Mrs. Wyman P. Sloan III
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MEMORIALS

Becca Harrell

Shepherd Center was saddened by the passing of Becca Harrell on December 7, 2021. Becca was a Founding Life Member of the Shepherd Center Auxiliary, and she and her husband Rudy were faithful donors to a variety of Shepherd Center programs since 1984.

Becca served as a member of Shepherd Center’s Advisory Board for decades and later served as an Emeriti Member of the Foundation’s Advisory Board. Becca was an advocate for the Center in Atlanta and helped advise the Center on enhancements to the entrance of Shepherd Pathways to add comfort and convenience for the patients and caregivers.
Anthony Mullins
Mrs. Shannon A. Mullins

Wyatt Howard Nelson
Mr. Ed Burch
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Chatfield
Ms. Anie Chinarian
David, Steve, Greg, Chris and Families
Mr. and Mrs. David Dewald
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Mr. David Morell
Mr. and Mrs. Fredrick Nelson
Seiber Design, Inc.
Mr. William Smelley
Mr. King Tom
David and Maria Varriichione

Kipp Stacey Newberry
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Mrs. Frank Troutman, Jr.

Blinda Petty
Mr. and Mrs. Jason Fraker
Mr. and Mrs. Guy Hayden
Mr. Joe Muller

Bartie and Oscar Plunket, Jr.
Ms. Jane Plunket

Randy Pyatt
Ms. Margaret Higgins

Roland Radford
Mrs. Alana S. Shepherd

Michael “Mikie” Rae, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Michael L. Rae, Sr.

Robert R. Richardson
Mr. and Mrs. Anthony K. Gailey

Samuel Rosen - Who Exemplified
Charitable Giving His Entire Life
Ms. Brenda Rosen

Emory A. Schwall
Mr. James E. Holmes
Mr. and Mrs. William H. Martin, Jr.

Margaret Shainker
Mr. Charles J. Shainker

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Douglas A. Spence
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Mr. Moses M. Spence

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Ms. Alice T. Long

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Thomas “Tommy” Tift
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Sally Tomlinson
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Mr. Andrew Muir
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Jed Woodside
Mr. and Mrs. Addison H. Meriwether

Dan and Margaret Yates
Mr. and Mrs. Dennis C. Coole, Jr.

Harry Young
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Townsend

*Bereaved

Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Crabtree
Rebecca Shaw Shepherd

The Shepherd Center community sadly marked the passing of Becca Shepherd on January 5, 2022. Becca was a Life Member of the Shepherd Center Auxiliary, and she, her husband Clyde, and their sons Clyde and George, were Founding Members of the Peach Corps, volunteering to serve and aid patients and their families at cookouts, Easter, and holiday events at the Center.

Becca proudly served as a member of Shepherd Center Foundation’s Advisory Board. She was a dedicated advocate for the Center in Atlanta and in her hometown of Cartersville, Georgia. Becca and her family’s generous gifts have funded numerous programs and projects at Shepherd Center throughout the years.

MEMORIALS

Mrs. Elizabeth Abernathy
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Mr. Fred V. Alias
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Vulcan Materials Company
Mr. and Mrs. Charles G. Wellborn
Mr. and Mrs. Mark C. West
Mrs. Lyda S. White
Dr. Michael Yochelson and Mr. Kevin Clift
Mr. and Mrs. S. Zachry Young
YPO Southern 7 Gold Chapter
Honorees are listed first in bold print followed by the names of those making gifts in their honor. This list reflects gifts made to Shepherd Center between October 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021.

Shepherd Center’s recreational therapists took patients to Hartsfield–Jackson Atlanta International Airport where they reviewed how to travel post-injury.

Sherry and David Abney  
Ms. Joanne Truffelman  
Fred Alias  
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen M. Berman  
Jonathan Altizer  
Mr. and Mrs. David Altizer  
David Andersen  
Mr. and Mrs. Donald R. Andersen  
Dr. David Apple, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher R. Hardage  
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph V. Quarles  
Mr. and Mrs. John D. Riddle  
Mr. Jim Unger  
Mr. and Mrs. John R. Webster III  
Dr. David Apple, Jr. — For Your Continued Effort to Serve the Community!  
Ms. Cathy D. Wisner  
Dr. and Mrs. David Apple, Jr.  
Headmaster and Mrs. William S. Peebles IV  
Cyndae Arrendale  
Dr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Callahan  
Mrs. Hong-Tsun Simon  
Mr. and Mrs. William D. Skinner  
Steve Ball  
Ms. Coleen Ball  
Anna Barbrey  
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Joiner  
Julie Barrett  
Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Barrett  
Sarah Batts — Thank you!  
Ms. Jessica Williams  
Phally Bentley  
Ms. Jennifer Bell-Harwood  
Major General and Mrs. David R. Bockel, Sr.  
Wish Happy Holidays to  
Ms. Helen Blase  
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kehoe  
Mr. and Mrs. Ronel Poppell  
Aml Boulwave — Good Board Presentation  
Dr. David F. Apple, Jr.  
Joel Bowman — Happy 50th Birthday  
Ms. Nan Rohrer  
Nell Bradbury Wishes Happy Holidays to  
Mrs. Marie Landis  
Mrs. Clinton Kennedy  
Mrs. Marsha Moorer  
Mr. and Mrs. Jane Humann  
Nell Bradbury’s Birthday  
Ms. Clinton B. Kennedy  
Livingston Bridger  
Mr. Rangeley Bailey  
Clara Brown — 2020 Paralympic Cycling Paralympian! Thank You to Shepherd Center!  
Ms. Debra L. Brown  
Ms. Tricia Buce  
Mr. and Mrs. Walter F. Buce  
Wilma Bunch — Good Board Presentation  
Dr. David F. Apple, Jr.  
Judy Burge  
Mr. Bernard S. Goldstein  
Bert and Joy Burns  
Ms. Ann R. Howell  
In Honor of Curtis’s Team  
Mr. and Mrs. John Morris  
Cole Burton  
Mr. Ricky Bryant  
Ele Caldwell — Happy Holidays  
Mr. and Mrs. Seth P. Richards  
Elaine Carlos’s Birthday  
Dr. Anna C. Elmers and Mr. Mike Elmers  
Clare Carmody  
Anonymous  
DJ Carver  
Ms. Beverly Casey  
Ezequiel Cassinelli  
Monarch Private Capital  
Baron Chamblee  
Hertford Co. Educational Foundation Inc.  
Mr. and Mrs. Tim McGee  
Sabrine Charif — Happy Holidays  
Ms. Marie Cassandra  
William M. Choate — Happy Holidays  
Anonymous  
Stephanie Cobb — Happy Holidays  
Ms. Lauren Brady  
Tim and Shirley Condrey — Happy Holidays  
Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. West  
Austin “AC” Cook  
Mr. and Mrs. Oliver M. Anderson III
Billy and Janelle Corey  
Mr. Dale Cardwell

Jill Cothron  
Mr. and Mrs. Wayland K. Cothron

Bob Cunningham  
The John and Rosemary Brown Family Foundation

Carol Curtis Wishes Happy Holidays to  
Mr. and Mrs. Mel Adler  
Mr. and Mrs. John Alston  
Mrs. Wanda Hopkins  
Mrs. Jane Knight  
Dr. and Mrs. Jerome Nailey  
Mrs. Sally Nunnelly  
Mrs. Lula Post  
Ms. Laura Spearman  
Mr. and Mrs. Edus Warren  
Mr. and Mrs. James Wells

James Curtis Wishes Happy Holidays to  
Mr. and Mrs. Mel Adler  
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Brucato  
Ms. Jean Caldwell  
The Honorable J. Cleland  
Mr. and Mrs. Brad Courts  
Mrs. Carol MacDougall Curtis  
Ms. Laureen Dame  
Mr. and Ms. Josh Davis  
Mr. and Mrs. Tread Davis  
Mr. and Mrs. Blake Dexter  
Mr. and Mrs. Allen Edson  
Mr. and Mrs. David Glass  
Drs. Matt and Kiery Graboski  
Mr. and Mrs. Ryan Hardage  
Ms. Sharon Holnis  
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Lofthouse  
Mr. Greg Logan  
Mr. and Mrs. Brian Maloney  
Mr. and Mrs. John Martin  
Mr. and Mrs. Todd Norwood  
Mrs. Sally Nunnelly  
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Pahler  
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Mr. and Mrs. Josh Rowan  
Ms. Marsha Schmidt  
Mr. and Mrs. Dell Sikes  
Mr. and Mrs. Ian Smith  
Dr. and Mrs. Nathan Utz  
Mr. and Mrs. Zachary Wilson III  
Mr. and Mrs. Davis Withers

Melinda Dabbiere  
Ms. Belvia James

Melinda Dabbiere — Thank You for Legendary Your Way!  
Dr. David F. Apple, Jr.

Leighanne and Richard Davis  
Wish Happy Holidays to  
Mr. and Mrs. John Anderson  
The Briggs Family  
Mr. and Mrs. Sonny Culp  
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Davis  
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Dr. and Mrs. JT Davis  
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Scot Davis  
Mr. Rodger Woolck

Ann Day  
The Aderhold Family Foundation

Dave and Karen DeRuyter  
Ms. Kathleen Maloney

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Roop Wish Happy Holidays to  
Debbie Dill  
Babette Perry

Josh Dowd  
Ms. Amy Nadler

Jen Driver  
Mr. Benjamin Wilcox

Michael Duncan  
Mr. and Mrs. William W. King

Kari Carlos and John Dunn — Congratulations on Your Marriage  
Mr. and Mrs. James A. Carlos  
Dr. Anna C. Elmers and Mr. Mike Elmers  
Mr. and Mrs. John Francisco  
Mr. and Mrs. Mark P. Hartigan  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard K. McCrea  
Mr. and Mrs. George S. Morgan  
Mrs. Sarah A. Morrison  
Ms. Cathy Radovic  
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Roden  
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Ms. Connie B. Straglos  
Dr. Barbara M. and Mr. Joseph Weismann  
Mr. and Mrs. Tony L. White

Maggie Wallace Eanes  
Mr. James G. Wallace

Maggie and Jim Eanes — Happy Holidays  
Mr. and Mrs. John S. Wallace

Travis Ellis  
Anonymous  
Mrs. Patricia Reed

Dr. Anna Elmers  
Mr. and Mrs. Donald C. Chapman, Jr.  
Dr. and Mrs. Lawrence C. Mohr

Bea Feiman  
Mr. Bernard S. Goldstein

Lowell Figur — In Honor of a Special Birthday  
Ms. Marlene Perlman

Dr. Robert M. Fine — Happy Birthday  
Mr. Bernard S. Goldstein

Ian Flannery — Great Presentation Board of Directors  
Dr. David F. Apple, Jr.

Taylor Fralick Adkins — Thankful for Shepherd Center  
Ms. Jacqueline Fralick

Crist Francisco — Happy Birthday  
Dr. Anna C. Elmers and Mr. Mike Elmers

William Fricks  
Mr. and Mrs. Mark R. Fricks

Hunter Gatzman  
Mrs. Rachael Gatzman

The Gip Gayle Family  
Mr. and Mrs. Franklin D. Cancel  
Dr. and Mrs. Donald Gilner  
Mr. Bernard S. Goldstein

Charles Ginden  
Mr. Bernard S. Goldstein

Barbara Goda  
Southeastern Charity Horse Show

James Godley — Happy Holidays  
Mr. Louis Hatcher

Matthew Godwin  
Mr. and Mrs. Milton Godwin, Jr.

Gary and Susan Goldstein  
Mr. Bernard S. Goldstein

Frank Goodboy  
Mr. Leonard Ponn

Dr. Rusty Gore  
Mr. and Mrs. Donald C. Chapman, Jr.

Stephen and Lauren Goss — Happy Holidays  
Ketchum & Walton Co.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Hall — Happy New Year!  
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Balliet

Anne Hamilton — Happy Holidays  
Mr. Geoffrey Hayden

Ms. Emma Harrington Wishes Happy Holidays to  
Damiana Alverson  
Sarah Batts  
Megan Collins  
Carmita Drummond  
Gale Eckstein  
Christina Edwards  
Courtney Harris  
Heather Hercher  
Mary Beth Hellmann  
Allison Hurr  
Leslie Jackson  
Diane Johnston  
Marie Landis  
Linda Levy  
Kaitlyn Long  
Kerry Ludlam  
Keaton Maxwell  
Deborah McGlawn  
Dean Melcher  
Penny Morrison-Ross  
Ellen Perry  
Melissa Pierce  
Ali Prickett  
John Ross  
Cara Roxland  
Jon Roxland  
Hannah Rushing  
Stephany Sance  
Alex Sebatlantig  
Erica Spurling  
Jen Swindall  
Jo Tapper  
Shanna Thorpe

Shepherd Center held a free car seat safety clinic where representatives from Shepherd Center, the Georgia Department of Public Health Injury Prevention Program, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the Georgia GOHS partnered to educate the community on how to safely install a car seat and buckle their children in.
Shepherd Center’s prom theme was “Enchanted Garden.” Adolescent patients enjoyed the night in the Anna and Hays Mershon Secret Garden.
The Spinal Cord Injury Day Program visited Sweetwater Creek State Park where the therapy team worked with patients on skills like improving endurance for ambulating over rough terrain, using adaptive equipment to navigate, and more.
Shepherd Center Needs Your Feedback!

We would like your feedback on your experience with Shepherd Center. Please scan the QR code with the camera on your phone to participate in a quick survey. Thank you!

For a paper survey, contact Jacqueline Baron-Lee, Ph.D., CPHQ, PMP, director of quality and outcomes management, at Jacqueline.Baron-Lee@shepherd.org or 404-367-1359.