



Handprints

SPRING 2022

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF HELPING CHILDREN HEAL AND GROW

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PORTRAIT OF A PIONEER:

MWPH Founder Hortense Kahn Eliasberg

How did Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital (MWPH) come to be? How did this unique pediatric hospital, dedicated to maximizing the health and independence of children with complex medical needs, get its start? The answer may surprise you. In celebration of our centennial anniversary, and in recognition of Women's History Month, we're sharing the story of the hospital's founder, Hortense Kahn Eliasberg.



Hortense was born in July 1899 in Baltimore, Maryland. As a young woman, she earned a bachelor's degree at Goucher College, then went on to earn a master's degree at Johns Hopkins University's Graduate School of Philosophy. Her master's thesis was a study of convalescent homes in New York and New Jersey, an experience that gave her firsthand knowledge of the challenges of children who needed a place to rest and recover after illness or hospitalization.

"It amazes me that, as a woman, she pursued a master's degree when very few did. They were all pioneers," said Ann Eliasberg Betten, Hortense's granddaughter and current hospital foundation board member.

No records survive that shine a light on what, specifically, prompted Hortense to act. It could have been what she learned during graduate school, or she could

have been inspired by a friend or family member with a sick child. Whatever the impetus, Hortense was determined to create a convalescent home for children in the Baltimore area. She realized that there was a significant, unmet need for a safe and welcoming environment to care for children between hospital and home.

In 1922, at only 22 years old, Hortense met with a group of influential doctors and community leaders—

including well-known businessmen, philanthropists, and the renowned physician and president of Johns Hopkins, William Welch. Their series of meetings garnered support for a convalescent home for children. The initial meeting was in February; by April, Happy Hills Convalescent Home for Children had a charter and bylaws; and it had the full 26-member board of trustees by June 1922.

"It's really remarkable that, as such a young woman in the 1920s, she convinced all of these prominent businessmen and physicians to recognize this opportunity. She was also able to gather the funding, the real estate, everything she needed to make this convalescent home a reality. This was her passion," said Sheldon Stein, president and CEO of MWPH.

continued on next page >>

PORTRAIT OF A PIONEER, *continued*

Happy Hills opened its doors in July of the same year, with Hortense as Secretary of the Board of Trustees, her desired role, until her death in 1949. At the outset, Happy Hills cared for many children who were malnourished. Over the years, the hospital evolved to meet the needs of the time, including chorea, tuberculosis, polio, and rheumatic fever—diseases that affected many children in the first half of the twentieth century (see story on page 7 for more on MWPH’s evolution of care).

“Prior to the development of sulfa and penicillin, Happy Hills stressed good nutrition, fresh air, sunshine, and exercise which was successful in helping children recover from illness or injury,” said Hortense’s son, Richard Eliasberg, who played a pivotal role in ensuring the hospital’s continued success after Hortense’s death. “Today, the hospital bears little resemblance to what it was when the hospital started back in the 1920s. I’m sure my mother would be absolutely amazed. It would probably be beyond her comprehension—what MWPH is doing today is so far advanced from what was going on in her lifetime.”

“It was very close to her heart. She devoted a tremendous amount of time to Happy Hills, making sure it would continue to serve the needs of children,” Betten said. “I’m so proud of her and so honored to be able to be a part of MWPH too, to be able to do what I can to keep the hospital going. It’s an honor to work with all of these wonderful doctors, nurses, and staff.”

MWPH salutes the vision, persistence, and dedication of our founder, Hortense Kahn Eliasberg. ♥

Join us this Women’s History Month as we honor the legacy of our founder with our #IamHortense social media campaign.

mwph.org/iamhortense



UPCOMING EVENTS

MAR 24 **CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF CARING FOR CHILDREN IN THE CAPITAL REGION**
A staff celebration will be held at UM Capital Region Medical Center

APR 06 **COMMUNITY WEDNESDAY AT WELL CRAFTED KITCHEN AND UNION CRAFT BREWING—SUPPORTING MWPH!**
Noon to 10 p.m.
1700 W 41st Street, Suite 425, Baltimore, MD 21211
\$1 from every pizza + \$1 from every pint will be donated to MWPH

APR 28 **BUBBLES FOR BABIES AT GREEN SPRING STATION**
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
10751 Falls Road, Lutherville-Timonium, MD 21093
Enjoy some bubbly for the babies! Enjoy tastings of more than 20 bubbles (and wines), hors d’oeuvres and shopping at Baltimore’s best boutiques. All proceeds support MWPH. Get your tickets here:

www.eventbrite.com/e/bubbles-for-babies-tickets-274930152487

MAY 24 **1922 SOCIETY RECEPTION**
5–7:30 p.m.
Mt. Washington Tavern
5700 Newbury Street, Baltimore, MD 21209
1922 Society members will gather for a special reception celebrating MWPH’s centennial year. Invites coming soon.



MT. WASHINGTON PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL
1922 2022
CENTENNIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

JUN 06 **CENTENNIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT**
Noon shotgun start
Hayfields Country Club
More info: mwph.org/golf



Centennial Corner

Check out the new section of the History Wall on the second floor of the Eliasberg building ▶



Our Centennial Staff Kickoff was on January 27. Staff enjoyed the festive morning, which included free breakfast, t-shirt and coffee mug gifts, and 1920s-themed fun ▶



Message from the President

Dear Friends,

2022 is a special year for MWPH. We're celebrating a once-in-a-lifetime milestone: our centennial. All year, we'll be marking the 100-year anniversary of the hospital's opening with special events and celebrations. Thank you to all of our staff for your outstanding dedication to MWPH. You are truly what makes our hospital the extraordinary place it is today.

As I reflect on this milestone, I am humbled by the steadfast commitment of so many individuals to this hospital over the decades. I am proud to be part of an organization that has been here to help children for the last 100 years, and one that is so well positioned to be around for another 100 years into the future. Our solid foundation gives us the strength to weather turbulent times, such as a global pandemic and the current labor shortage.

We continue to look ahead as we work to meet the needs of more children. We're celebrating the ground-breaking for our new Ability Center, a state-of-the-art rehabilitation space that will help thousands of children reach their potential. The construction should be completed in 10 to 11 months.

We're also in the process of relocating our sleep program's facilities. Sleep studies are a key part of the diagnostic and treatment process for

many children with complex medical needs, and MWPH is proud to offer this service to our community. When the relocation process is complete, all seven sleep study rooms will be in the same area of the hospital. This will streamline workflows for our staff and increase access to sleep studies for our patients, making it easier to get in quickly for a sleep study.

All in all, as spring begins to bloom once again, there is much to celebrate here at MWPH.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheldon Stein".

Sheldon J. Stein,
President & CEO

← Getting in the spirit at the Centennial Kick-Off Event

Where Are They Now?—Keith Curtis



Keith at MWPH as an infant

When Keith Curtis was born in 1998, he had pulmonary atresia as well as a rare form of congenital heart disease, a collection of four heart defects called Tetralogy of Fallot. He had surgery when he was one week old and a second surgery the following week. He also needed a tracheostomy to make sure he could get the oxygen his body needed. At one month old, Keith came to MWPH to recover. He stayed at MWPH until he was 10 months old.

He had his trach removed at 18 months, and in the following years, he had a series of cardiac catheterizations and two more open heart surgeries, the last one when he was 10 years old.

"He has overcome every obstacle, including low oxygen levels, repeated heart surgeries, and lead poisoning," said Keith's mom, Donna Colston.

Today, Keith is 24 years old. He graduated from high school and works part-time at Amazon. He stays in shape by riding his bicycle,

which is one of his favorite activities. He also loves working on cars. "I want to thank the MWPH staff for taking care of me as a baby," Keith said. "I'm grateful to be able to live a normal life as an adult with only moderate limitations."

Even though it has been many years since Keith was there, Donna remembers the special care he received at MWPH. "MWPH was great to us: They provided transportation to the hospital every day and taught my daughter and me how to care for his trach," Donna



Keith today, at 24 years old.

said. "They set up around-the-clock nursing care for him when he went home. And they even provided a Christmas that was out of this world. I will never, ever forget that hospital."

Keith Curtis is part of MWPH's 100-year legacy of life-changing care. No matter how our hospital's care evolves, the truest measure of our success is the full and healthy lives of our former patients. ♥

CENTENNIAL
EDITION

EMPLOYEE NEWS

GET TO KNOW OUR STAR EMPLOYEES

The STAR employee award honors those employees who personify our CARES values—Considerate, Attentive, Respectful, Efficient, Safe. These honorees are recognized as outstanding role models in our hospital.

January



Name: Lindsay Gavin
Title: Licensed Psychologist
Department: Psychology and Neuropsychology
How long have you worked at MWPB: About 3 years
What is your favorite thing about your job: I truly enjoy and am passionate about working with children and their families, particularly those who are suffering the

impacts of trauma. Therapy can sometimes be intense and emotional, and there are difficult and tearful sessions, but there are also many times where we can laugh, use humor, and have fun. Being able to experience and support children through their whole range of emotional experiences is something I am grateful for in this work.

Name one thing that most people don't know about you: I have an identical twin who is also a trauma therapist and works with adults. We have a dream to one day open our own practice where we can enjoy confusing patients all day long.

March



Name: Felina Basmaci
Title: Benefits and Payroll Specialist
Department: Human Resources
How long have you worked at MWPB: 10 years
What is your favorite thing about your job: My favorite thing about working for MWPB is the community and fellowship among the staff.

PROMOTIONS

- **Lisa Arce-Williams** from Administrative Asst to Executive Asst
- **Lindie Ashman** from Sr CL Specialist to Manager of CL
- **Jessica Decker** from Nurse Team Leader to Nurse Manager
- **Danette Green** from Cook to Food Services Supervisor
- **Jill Gatzke** from Ped Psychologist to LAC Program Administrator
- **Kenneth Gelfand** from Psych Manager to Psych Director
- **Sean MacDonald** from LPN to Nurse Graduate
- **Carrie Smith** from RN to Nurse Team Leader
- **Daytona Stevenson** from PCA to Nurse Graduate

CONGRATULATIONS



Congratulations to **Kenneth M. Gelfand, PhD** who is the new director of psychology and neuropsychology. Dr. Gelfand assumes this role after having been psychology manager, internship training director, and senior psychologist at MWPB. Dr. Gelfand is a highly respected

clinician, teacher, and mentor. He was instrumental in the American Psychological Association's accreditation of our psychology training program. We are pleased that we will have continuity of leadership in our large and extremely well-respected behavioral health program. Congratulations!



We are pleased to announce the promotion of **Lisa Arce-Williams** to the role of executive assistant to the President and CEO. Lisa has worked at MWPB for nine years as a member of the customer service department and has over 20 years of experience working in a professional office setting. During

her employment with MWPB, she has demonstrated a high level of professionalism and excellent communication skills. She maintains a well-run, organized office and consistently exemplifies our CARES standards. Congratulations, Lisa!

CONGRATULATIONS



Please congratulate Anna Snee on acquiring the certified brain injury specialist (CBIS) credential. Anna is now certified as a CBIS under the Academy of Certified Brain Injury Specialists, which is designed to address the unique needs of those who care for individuals with brain injury.

Anna is committed to improving the lives of individuals with brain injuries by providing support and normalization throughout the inpatient stay, assessing community-based needs in the outpatient brain injury clinic, and assisting with the school reentry process. Anna was also recently promoted to clinical specialist. Thank you for your commitment to MWPB, Anna!

MYTHBUSTERS



Myth busted by Elizabeth Getzoff Testa, PhD, MWPH senior psychologist

MYTH: MYTH: Low self-esteem is just part of being a teenager. There is nothing teens or their parents can do to change that.

FACT: About 20 percent of adolescents can struggle with low self-esteem. Challenges with self-esteem during adolescence are incredibly common.

There are many reasons and contributing factors that can reduce self-esteem. Adolescence is a time of change, when puberty occurs at different speeds and can present differently. This leads to many opportunities for one to feel different, but at a time when it is important to be seen as the same as your peers. There are also a number of risk factors that can negatively impact self-esteem including quality of peer relationships, obesity, screen and social media use, and academic performance. The COVID-19 pandemic has created the perfect storm for many to experience more worry, lower mood, and potentially lower self-esteem—this has resulted in a co-occurring mental health pandemic.

Self-esteem is not fixed, however. There are many ways to build self-esteem with the help of parents and loved ones:

- One method is engaging in something that you enjoy, like an instrument or craft. I worked with one amazing teen who began crocheting and eagerly shows me her creations when we meet.
- Positive self-talk is also incredibly important to create empowering messaging for yourself.
- Having a goal or intention for the day, like doing homework or walking a certain number of steps, can provide opportunities to achieve.
- I often hear my patients talk about themselves in a way that they would never think or speak about their friends or loved ones. Allow yourself to be kind to yourself: think and act like you would to a friend, but to yourself.
- Seek out support from loved ones, friends, and school or work supports.
- If the above suggestions have not been helpful enough, therapy is often an additional helpful resource.

A Day In The Life of Sharon Selko, PT

Senior physical therapist Sharon Selko, PT has been helping children improve their strength, mobility, coordination, and motor skills at MWPH for almost 30 years. We recently caught up with her...

7:00 a.m. – Help improve the mobility of an 8-year-old in a one-hour outpatient appointment before school.

8:15 a.m. – Co-treat a patient with an occupational therapist.

9:28 a.m. – Head upstairs to complete a 30-minute PT session with one of the babies on the Pakula unit.

10:17 a.m. – Make recommendations for patients to get the adaptive equipment they need, from wheelchairs to walkers, at the adaptive equipment clinic.

11:39 a.m. – Make an orthotics mold for a patient, so that custom leg braces can be manufactured for the child.

12:48 p.m. – Write a letter of medical necessity, to help a patient get insurance coverage for a stander.

1:22 p.m. – Prepare for Monday's movement disorders clinic, where a team works to determine a plan of care for patients with abnormal movements or muscle tone.

2:04 p.m. – Answer emails with questions about the student physical therapy residency program.

2:23 p.m. – Consult with nursing staff on care of a patient with multiple disabilities in the inpatient unit.

2:50 p.m. – Make a cast for an inpatient.

Sharon's favorite MWPH memory

“Recently, I learned that a former patient’s family made a donation in my honor for the Hope Heal Grow campaign. It’s such an honor—and has been overwhelming for me. I treated the child when he was a toddler almost 20 years ago, and now he is thriving as an adult. The fact that his family would remember and honor the care I gave him with a donation is just amazing.”



THANK YOU!

Together, this staff team raised **\$108,000** as part of the Hope Heal Grow Centennial Campaign. Thank you to all who participated in this historic staff campaign for MWPH. Please make sure to check out the special donor wall sign on the first floor of the Eliasberg building, right outside the rehab gym.



EDUCATION



THE GOAL OF MWPH'S EDUCATION TEAM is to help everyone in the hospital—nursing and clinical teams, nonclinical employees, and even parents—learn and grow. The department itself is always growing and expanding, exploring new opportunities and launching new initiatives.

“Our department’s job is hospital education—not just nursing education,” said Betsy Day, director of hospital education and organization development. “We continue to grow both clinical and nonclinical offerings, so that everyone at MWPH has professional development opportunities.”

The department handles new employee orientation specific to units and departments, as well as just-in-time education, the hospital’s residency program, workplace violence initiatives, and more. Current areas of focus include revising and standardizing the nursing orientation process across the hospital, developing a rapid agency onboarding to help address current staffing issues, the Nursing Support Program state grant, parent education in the simulation lab, monthly mock code blues, and the online learning management system UMMS U, among other ongoing projects.

Among the brand-new projects that the department is focused on is the Butterfly Project, which places a butterfly at the patient’s

bedside to signify that the family has lost the patient’s twin. “It’s an international program that also offers resources on how to talk with the parents about the twin and acknowledge their loss in a helpful way,” said Kelsey Franklin, neonatal clinical education specialist. “We’re glad to be launching this program, and to have gotten so much support from departments across the hospital.”

Looking ahead, the education team wants to expand the use of the simulation lab by working with unit-based leadership to support leaders and staff by including simulation scenarios. “We want to collaborate with leaders to find out what they think their gaps are, how they’d like to address them, and then work alongside their staff to fill the gap,” said Linda Hutter, simulation education and AHA coordinator. “This will enable the leaders to grow with their teams, improving retention and satisfaction.”

Additional future initiatives include developing an education program geared toward patient care assistants and engaging in morale-boosting activities that provide encouragement to our dedicated staff. “The department has an important role to play, not only in professional development, but in retention, connecting with our employees and giving them what they need to grow as professionals and as people,” Day said. ♥

MWPH'S EVOLVING CARE

When Happy Hills Convalescent Home for Children opened in the 1920s, it provided an important service for children who needed to rest and recuperate after illness or injury. Part of its home-like atmosphere was because the building was previously a private mansion. Sunshine, nourishing food, and exercise were central to the home's care. Children received schooling at the home, and visiting hours were strict: families were able to visit once or twice a week for a short time.

Times have certainly changed!

Throughout its 100-year history, Happy Hills—now MWPH—evolved its care as the medical advancements of the twentieth century unfolded, from just fresh air to iron lungs to portable ventilators the size of a laptop computer and simulation labs. The 1960s saw the first child life services at the hospital, beginning as play therapy and developing into a key part of MWPH's multidisciplinary team. The evolution of care for children has been reflected in everything MWPH provides for the care of the most fragile children.

"There are very few hospitals like MWPH anywhere in the country, and the services we provide are state of the art, comprehensive and family centered", explained Richard M. Katz, MD, MWPH's vice president of medical affairs and chief medical officer. "We are fortunate to have great partners in Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland. These two medical leaders recognize our importance, and we value the expertise that we share."

MWPH is fortunate to have many long-time employees, some of whom were on staff in the 1970s and 80s, witnessing the move from the old mansion to the current Rogers Avenue location. In the 1980s,



the hospital began to see more acute patients, in addition to the convalescent patients it was known for. One multibed ward housed babies who were waiting for surgery or who had been born premature, another unit housed toddlers and young children recover-

ing from illness or injury. A third ward provided nursing home care, housing long-term patients with severe brain injuries or developmental disabilities.

Over the last 20 years, MWPH has expanded its ability to care for medically complex patients with more significant needs, requiring a higher staff skill level. The hospital has more subspecialty physicians, more nurses with higher levels of specialty certification, and lots of technology.

"The kids we care for are a lot sicker now. They could deteriorate a lot more quickly, and we have highly skilled staff who can pick up on those changes before they turn into an emergency," said Denise Pudinski, MSHCA, BSN, RN, CCM, NE-BC, MWPH's vice president of patient care services and chief nurse executive.

MWPH's care will continue to evolve to fill a key role between hospital and home. "As acute care hospitals see even sicker patients, we will continue to provide higher levels of step-down care," Pudinski said. "MWPH is ideally positioned to train the caregivers and community to make sure children have all necessary support in place before they go home."

Long-time MWPH nurse Violet Ebbesen, RN, agrees. "The techniques and technology may change, but what has not changed is the continued professionalism, dedication, exceptional caring, love, and family feeling that the patients and families receive from all the disciplines and departments at MWPH." ♥

MWPH: IN THE COMMUNITY

The MWPH Swim Safety Program was developed and implemented by our Community Benefit Program and Pikesville High School student and lifeguard, Ellie Hanover. The goal of the program is to teach Baltimore City school-aged children water safety, basic swimming skills, and introduce how swimming is not only fun but a healthy activity and sport.

In partnership with the Callow Hill Aquatic Center, the program will run on Sundays for 6 weeks. We have 20 children, ages 5-13, attending the program and 15 volunteer swim teachers, also students at Pikesville High School.

We are very excited to be able to offer this needed program to Baltimore City children and look forward to its continued growth!





Patient Parent Perspective

Kevin and Karly Danaher



Kevin and Karly Danaher are parents to Miles, who is 6 months old. Miles was born at 27 weeks and 2 days weighing less than 2 pounds. After spending more than two months in the NICU, Miles transferred to MWPH in October 2021.

How did your family first connect with MWPH?

We looked at MWPH as our goal when Miles was in the NICU. Once he finally arrived there and adjusted to the new environment, his development began to move forward by leaps and bounds. After 52 days, Miles was discharged home from MWPH—just in time for his first Christmas.

What other services has your family received at MWPH?

When Miles came to MWPH, he was being fed through a tube and had some lung development issues. We like to say that at MWPH, he

learned to eat and he learned to breathe. Miles’s doctor was absolutely wonderful—it was a relief to have the same doctor every day, instead of having a different doctor every day. Dr. DeWitt went out of her way to connect with us every single day. That continuity, having someone looking after him who was invested in him, was key for us.

Today, Miles is doing really well and is meeting all of his milestones for his adjusted age.

What stands out about MWPH?

The atmosphere. Everyone was so kind; it felt like we were at home. Also, at discharge, MWPH did a great job of scheduling a year or more of critically important appointments for us. They sent us home with all of this information, to make the transition home easier.

What advice would you give to parents coming to MWPH for the first time?

You are in very good hands with MWPH—trust the team. They really know best. We’re happy he was there as long as he was—if we had pushed him to come home earlier, he wouldn’t have been ready. It takes patience, but it’s worth it.

While your baby is at MWPH, take advantage of the expert guidance of the nurses. Use it as a learning experience with your baby, and absorb as much as possible. Jump in with the care while you’re there. Don’t be scared; the nurses can teach you. Learning will make the transition home easier as well.

Kudos to our staff! MWPH’s tradition of quality care, as we celebrate 100 years of healing and growing!

FROM PATIENT PARENTS

“We are blessed to have Dr. Keane and the staff at MWPH to care for our precious son. I’m certain Dr. Keane plays a large role in our son’s quality of life.”

“Excellent care takers who show genuine interest and concern about patients.”

“Always a good experience with Dr. Akhtar. We feel she is a blessing to our daughter’s well being.”

“Dr. Miller is very kind, patient, knowledgeable, & understanding.”

For information or questions about *Handprints*, contact **Katie Yeager**, Communications Coordinator at katharine.yeager@mwph.org



Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital

Where Children Go to Heal and Grow

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Handprints is a publication of the Development department for MWPH’s patient families, staff and the community.



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