



Mt. Washington  
Pediatric Hospital

Where Children Go to Heal and Grow

Est. 1922

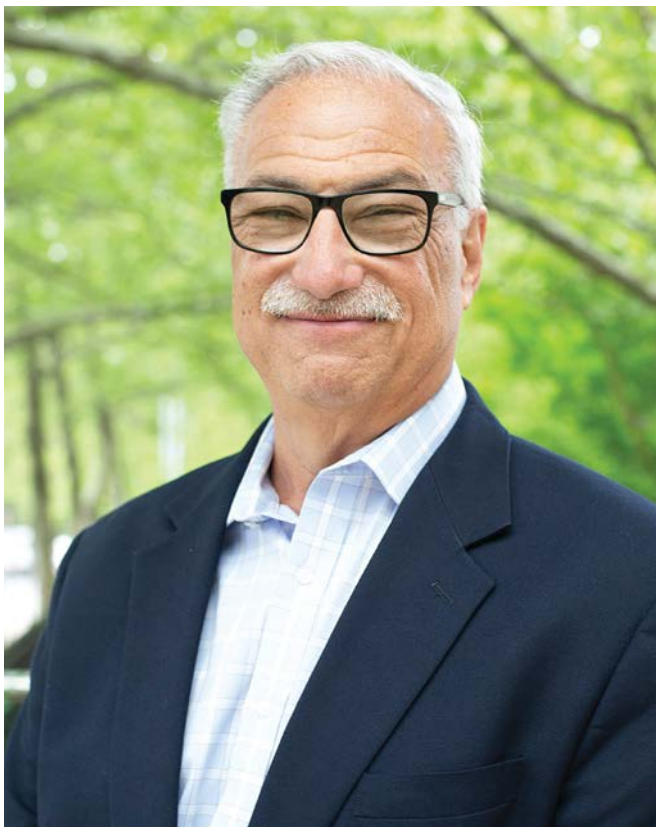
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## Centennial Spotlight:

# MWPH President and CEO Looks to the Future



*As he looks to his retirement, Sheldon J. Stein shares what he's learned throughout his stellar healthcare leadership career.*



It's the end of an era at Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital (MWPH). Hospital President and CEO Sheldon J. Stein (Shelly to his friends) is retiring after a 40+ year career in healthcare, 28 of which were spent in leadership roles at MWPH. Shelly has served the hospital's patients, families, and staff as president and CEO since 2002.

As we wish him well on his future adventures in retirement, we'd like to share some of the highlights of his tenure from his perspective—including the top five leadership principles he used each day.

A native New Yorker, Shelly began his career as a respiratory therapist at a Long Island hospital, then as a cardiopulmonary technologist at Presbyterian Hospital in Colorado, followed by work as director of respiratory therapy at Denver's Mercy Medical Center and at the University of Colorado before being elevated to serve as director of operations for clinical and support services at the University of Colorado. He joined MWPH in 1995 as vice president for patient care services, and in 1998 he was promoted to chief operating officer.

### Shelly's impact at MWPH

Early in Shelly's tenure, he joined the executive leadership team and physician leaders to conduct a full strategic analysis of the hospital's current state (using the familiar strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats paradigm). From that analysis, the team established four long-term priorities:

- 1 Grow the hospital's programs, particularly outpatient services
- 2 Broaden the admission criteria for patients the hospital could admit
- 3 Improve outpatient operations
- 4 Expand the hospital's footprint

"Those were the four strategic opportunities we had, and that's where I've focused the last 20 years," he said.

Each step in the process required the execution of many interrelated initiatives. For example, in order to expand the hospital's outpatient offerings, the hospital first needed new facilities. Shelly oversaw the construction of the Rosenberg outpatient center, many infrastructure upgrades to support a larger facility, followed by



PHOTO: Mike Morgan

expansions to the Rosenberg and Eliasberg buildings. And MWPH has recently broken ground on construction for the Ability Center, a new 4,000+ square foot rehabilitation space.

These four initiatives required growth and evolution that reached into every corner of the hospital. “For a strategic expansion of this magnitude to be successful, the whole institution needs to grow. Not just the clinical piece, but the board governance, the philanthropic piece, the finance piece, the support services piece,” he said. “Everyone has to evolve, and part of my job is bringing everyone together to understand the vision of the journey we’re on.”

The process requires patience, focus, and strategic vision. “It’s fun, it’s exciting—and it’s slow. These things

take time,” Shelly said. “MWPH’s journey will continue. I believe the new leadership will be able to use the foundation, what we established, to continue MWPH’s evolution.”

More than anything, Shelly attributes his extraordinary career success to the people who have supported, helped, encouraged, and believed in him over the past 40+ years. “The most important thing I hope people recognize is that my career is not the work of an individual, it’s a team. And not only the team at work, but the team at home, my family. They’ve been extremely supportive of what I do, from moving across the country so I could take advantage of this opportunity with MWPH to volunteering at the hospital. I have been very fortunate to have a great work team and a great family team,” he said.



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Shelly looks forward to embarking on a new chapter, full of time with family and friends, travel, and lots of golf. Although we at MWPH are sad to lose his leader-

ship, we are immensely grateful to have had him at the helm during this extraordinary phase of growth for our organization. **Thank you, Shelly!**

## SHELLY STEIN'S TOP 5 LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

Over the course of his career, Shelly has conducted his working life in accordance with a handful of leadership principles that have acted as his “true north.”

We asked him to share them with us in his own words:

1

### Serve the Team Who Serves the Patients

Early in my career, one of my mentors told me a philosophy that has stayed with me. It's that my role as a leader is to make sure that the team—the people working at the bedside—have what they need to do the best possible job they can. I need to work for them to make sure they have the equipment, resources, and time they need to deliver the best possible care. My role is to facilitate their roles by supporting and enabling them to do their work to the highest possible level. MWPH's mission—to maximize the health and independence of the children we serve—is what inspires and drives us all.

2

### Be Accessible

I believe in being visible. Before COVID-19 changed things, I'd always go to each new employee orientation to introduce myself and begin getting to know the new team members who were coming on board. I like to walk around the hospital day to day, meeting and talking with the staff. I get to know them as people, not just on a professional level, but on a personal level as well.

3

### Focus on the Process, Not Just the Result

When I first started as a hospital administrator, I was hyper focused on achieving whatever result I was aiming for—buy that piece of equipment, recruit this individual, etc. How I got there, I didn't pay attention to. But later on, I realized that the process of getting there—how you make decisions, how you communicate, how you

plan—is just as important as getting the result. Moreover, if you only focus on the result, you can be very disruptive to the organization you're trying to help.

Instead of narrowing focusing on the end you're going after, ask yourself, are you being collegial? Are you on the right path? Today, I find I spend as much time working on the process of getting to a decision as on making the decision itself.

4

### Trust Your Team, and Hold Them Accountable

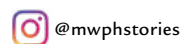
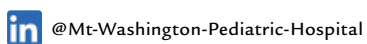
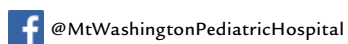
As a CEO, I am not an expert in any field whatsoever. I am a generalist. So, my approach is to surround myself with people who are really knowledgeable in their fields, listen to their advice, and hold them accountable. My head of development is an expert in fundraising; my head of the medical staff is an expert in clinical care. I bring together a team of people who are a lot smarter than I am—and who are not “yes” people—and I hold them accountable.

5

### Make Room for Both Life and Work

One of the things that's great about MWPH is that it's possible to have a good work-life balance working here. We have devoted a lot of time and attention to finding recruitment and retention strategies that enable our staff to have a balance between work and time to destress, be with their families. I've tried to model that as well by making sure I get out of the office and go home to my family, take vacations, and find time for myself.

For more information about MWPH, please visit [mwph.org](https://www.mwph.org).



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