

# 2025 Impact Report



**University**  
**HOSPITAL**  
Foundation

# Message from Leadership

Dear Friends,

Each year, I am reminded of the remarkable things we can accomplish when we come together. That's why I am honored to share University Hospital Foundation's 2025 Impact Report with you. As you read through this report, I hope you feel the impact you're having in advancing our critical mission.

This past year was defined by tangible progress in clinical advancements across the hospital. At our spring fundraising event, Toast & Tribute, we were proud to honor University Hospital's Cardiac Care team, for their extraordinary skill and commitment to exceptional patient outcomes that save lives each day. Their clinical excellence is a source of pride for our entire community and a powerful reminder of what high-quality care can achieve.



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*“As we look ahead, our focus remains clear: to meet the needs of our patients and their loved ones by bringing empathy, excellence, and equity to healthcare. We are deeply grateful to you for investing in us.”*

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This September, our annual Golf Classic reached new heights. We recognized Dan Morley for his leadership, generosity, and dedication to University Hospital and its Foundation. Thanks to our generous sponsors and attendees, the event raised \$425,000 towards building a new, state-of-the-art operating room.

Your investment ensures patients receive the best care today and lays the foundation for even better care tomorrow. Throughout this report, you will read stories that highlight how your support is advancing care across the hospital: from strengthening trauma education and preparedness to expanding resources for mothers and newborns. You'll also hear from donors sharing why they give, highlighting the personal commitment and compassion that make this work possible. These programs and improvements exist because of you.

Thank you for believing in our work and for helping us strengthen the health of our community. I cannot wait to see what next year will bring.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Ledford'.

**Calvin R. Ledford, Jr.**

Chair, Board of Trustees

University Hospital Foundation



# Your Impact in 2025

This year, University Hospital Foundation secured over \$4,000,000 to ensure exceptional care for our community.

## Emergency Medicine & Trauma

Our expanded Emergency Department now better accommodates the 100,000 patients we see each year with greater privacy, updated technology, and faster access to life-saving care. Our Emergency Clothing Closet supported 3,500 patients, and trauma education programs reached more than 5,000 people.



## Center for Advanced Liver Disease and Transplant

University Hospital continues to rank among the nation's best for three-year liver transplant survival, reflecting the dedication and expertise of our clinical teams. Construction is underway on a new, consolidated Center for Advanced Liver Disease & Transplant, bringing all services under one roof to improve access, coordination, and the patient experience. The Center is slated to open in early 2026.

## Maternal & Child Health

Maternal and child health programs continue to grow, with enhanced prenatal support, strengthened NICU services, and family-centered initiatives providing resources directly to patients, ensuring parents and children receive the care and comfort they need.



## Breast Cancer Screening & Community Outreach

Early detection of breast cancer is growing across Newark. Our mobile mammography program screened nearly 3,000 women in its first year, helping catch breast cancer earlier and reduce the number of late-stage diagnoses in our community.



## Hybrid Operating Room

Planning continues for a new, state-of-the-art operating room that integrates advanced imaging directly into the surgical suite. This space will let surgeons diagnose, image, and treat patients without moving between rooms, improving precision, reducing procedure times, and creating a safer, more seamless patient experience.

## Workforce Development

Training and education opportunities allow our employees and community to grow and advance within University Hospital, strengthening our workforce and ability to care for our patients. Through our partnership with West Side High School, students gain hands-on exposure to healthcare professions through internships and rotations.

# When Every Second Counts, Your Support Makes the Difference

Severe injuries often occur suddenly, with no warning — the result of a car crash, a bad fall, a natural disaster, and more. Behind every traumatic injury is a journey: a loved one anxiously awaiting a prognosis, a child in critical care, a community counting on our ability to respond swiftly. When the unthinkable happens, University Hospital is always ready.



The Eric Muñoz Trauma Center at University Hospital is the only state-certified Level 1 Trauma Center in Northern New Jersey and the busiest center in the state, caring for more than 5,800 patients in 2024 alone. As a Level 1 Trauma Center, UH provides the most advanced care for the region's most complex cases, with specialists available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, across every clinical service.

You make this possible. Philanthropic dollars fuel innovation at UH, ensuring our Trauma Center is both a leader in patient outcomes and a cornerstone for education and innovation. As an academic medical center, we take great care to invest money into programs that have the greatest impact, well beyond our initial investment. A strong example is training the next generation of trauma providers to advance life-saving care across New Jersey and beyond.

Launched in 2022 with support from The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey, University Hospital's Trauma Education and Simulation Program continues to make a meaningful impact today. Doctors, nurses, and first responders leverage simulation technology to replicate real-world emergencies, rotating through adult, pediatric, and disaster scenarios, so clinicians can continue to strengthen critical skills in advanced trauma life support, trauma nursing, trauma-informed care, and patient communication.

What began as a grant-funded initiative has become a model for continuous learning and clinical excellence.

Beyond treating physical injuries, UH supports patients and families through our Trauma Recovery Center, survivorship programs, and spiritual care services because we know trauma affects every aspect of a person's well-being. These programs help patients rebuild their lives long after they leave the hospital by providing emotional support, counseling, and a sense of community.

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*"I was hit by an SUV and suffered catastrophic injuries requiring multiple surgeries and an extended hospitalization. If it were not for the dedicated trauma physicians, orthopedic surgeons, neurologists, and nurses at UH, I would not be here. Thanks to them, I was able to go home in 6 months and return to work in 9 months. I will always be indebted to these professionals."*

**– Al Perrella, Trauma Patient**

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Your donations sustain our comprehensive, compassionate approach to care. Because of you, we're improving outcomes for our patients and building a lasting model of education, preparedness, and healing that will shape trauma care for generations to come.



# Healthy Beginnings, Brighter Futures

Every day at University Hospital, our teams work to ensure that every mother and child in the Newark region have access to compassionate care, health education, and the support they need to thrive.

We know that health doesn't begin or end at the doctor's office. It's shaped by our homes, schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods. Here, in Newark, 63% of children live in low-income households, and many more families face challenges to receiving the care and resources they need to build healthier lives. That's why University Hospital reaches beyond its walls to break down barriers in the community and connect families to healthcare.

Thanks to the unwavering commitment of our supporters, including the Roots & Wings Foundation, which has invested more than \$2 million since 2022, we provide expectant moms and their babies with the resources they need to stay healthy long after they leave our care.

Because of you, we're able to provide in-depth, practical patient education that gives parents and caregivers the confidence and knowledge they need from day one. Families learn about safe car seat use, breastfeeding, and infant care — everyday skills that make a lasting difference.

In our Centering Pregnancy and Centering Parenting programs, expectant and new mothers learn from healthcare providers and one another, creating a supportive environment that builds healthier habits for the whole family.

For parents who cannot afford a car seat, we provide one at no cost, along with hands-on demonstrations from Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians to ensure every baby rides home safely.



As a nationally designated “Baby-Friendly Hospital”, we uphold the highest standards for mother-baby care related to infant feeding. Our lactation consultants offer ongoing guidance, and mothers returning to work can get electric breast pumps. This may seem simple, but it makes a profound impact to ensure newborns receive ideal nutrition that supports growth, boosts their immune system, and improves long-term health outcomes.



**Baby Daveen,  
Neonatal ICU Graduate**

This commitment to accessible, person-centered care extends throughout University Hospital. That’s why University Hospital Foundation is raising funds to transform our Pediatric Care Unit into a brighter, more nurturing environment for the 900 children treated there each year, including in the Pediatric ICU. Designed to increase comfort and uplift patients and guardians, the future Pediatric Care Unit will foster an environment of care where children can laugh, play, and simply be kids throughout their recovery.

Because of you, we’re not just treating illnesses, we’re keeping a promise to our community: to build a future where good health isn’t a privilege, but something that every parent, child, and family deserves.

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*"What inspires me every day is seeing how education and support can transform a family’s journey. When mothers feel informed and confident, their babies start life on a stronger path. In our group care programs, I’m constantly amazed by the bonds that form. They’re proof that when people come together, healing becomes a shared experience."*

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**Dr. Damali Campbell**  
Medical Director of Ambulatory Services,  
OB/GYN

# Celebrating Excellence: Toast & Tribute Fuels Our Mission



We were proud to honor University Hospital's Cardiology and Cardiothoracic Surgery Divisions at this year's Toast & Tribute. Led by Drs. Alfonso Waller and Justin Sambol, this extraordinary team delivers life-saving, compassionate care to a community disproportionately affected by heart disease.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in New Jersey, and Newark citizens face far higher rates of high blood pressure, obesity, heart disease, and stroke. University Hospital's cardiac team meets this urgent need with advanced, evidence-based treatments — from managing complex conditions to performing intricate bypass, valve, and minimally invasive procedures.

This team has pioneered major advances, including the nation's first use of smartphone technology to treat heart attack patients and New Jersey's first use of leadless pacemakers. They also hold 15 years of Advanced Heart Failure certification (with Distinction) and accreditation for noninvasive cardiac imaging.

Behind these achievements is an integrated team of clinicians and staff working seamlessly across clinics, cath labs, ORs, and diagnostic suites. Thank you to everyone who joined us in celebrating their impact.

# Teed Up for Impact: Reflecting on the Golf Classic

University Hospital Foundation's 2025 Golf Classic was held on September 29 at Canoe Brook Country Club in Summit, New Jersey, raising a record-breaking \$425,000 to support a new state-of-the-art hybrid operating room. This integrated space will allow surgeons to perform imaging, diagnostics, and complex procedures in a single room, improving surgical accuracy, reducing procedure times, and enhancing patient outcomes.

We proudly to honored Dan Morley, President Emeritus of Business Furniture, Inc. (BFI), as this year's honoree. Dan joined the golf committee in 2023 and quickly brought new energy, helping secure sponsors and foursomes and playing a key role in making this year's event the most successful in its 12-year history. His decades-long partnership with UH includes furnishing welcoming spaces for patients, families, and staff, and his dedication to mentorship and community impact is well recognized.



**Dan Morley**

Dan's generosity extends beyond the hospital. Through his passion for golf and community engagement, he has helped raise funds for various charitable organizations over many years. He continues to leverage his experience to grow the Golf Classic and support vital programs that provide clothing, transportation, and health education to patients in need.



The overwhelming support at this year's Golf Classic demonstrates the region's commitment to healthcare excellence and equity. This success brings University Hospital closer to building a new hybrid operating room, a crucial investment that will revolutionize surgical care.

# Why I Give: Mary Grace Pizarro

Breast cancer challenged Mary Grace Pizarro in ways she never expected, but it also clarified her purpose: to support access to life-saving care for others. Throughout her treatment, she discovered that even the simplest routines — showing up, breathing, and grounding her mind, body, and spirit — became essential to her healing.



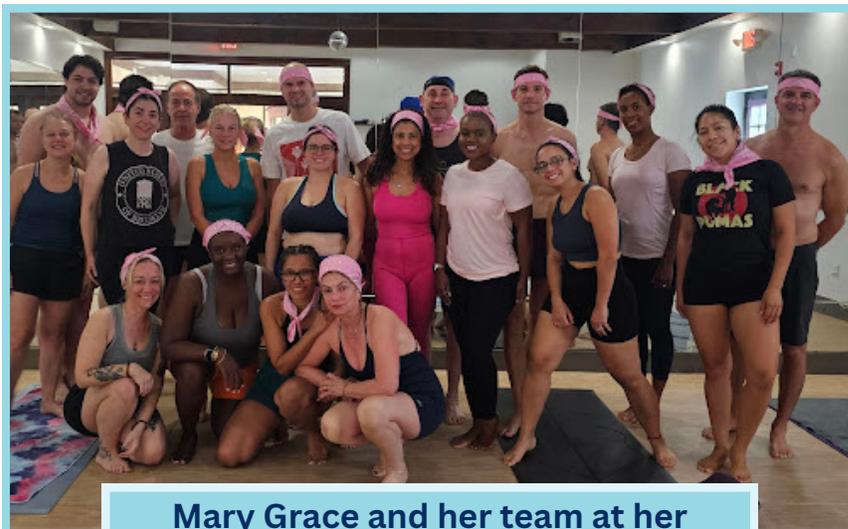
Strengthened by resilience, early detection, and the dedicated care she received, Mary Grace felt called to give back. When she learned about University Hospital's mission to bring screenings and critical services to underserved communities, she knew she wanted to be part of that impact.

Today, Mary Grace supports this mission as both a donor and an advocate. Through her fundraising efforts and her work fostering health and wellness at Juniper Yoga + Fitness in Montclair, NJ, she is committed to helping others stay strong, informed, and empowered.

In her first two months of fundraising, Mary Grace raised more than \$3,000 — and this is only the beginning of her commitment to expanding awareness and access to care.

*“We keep going — support the cause, spread awareness, and keep showing up. It’s something I want to continue for myself and for everyone around us.”*

**- Mary Grace Pizarro**

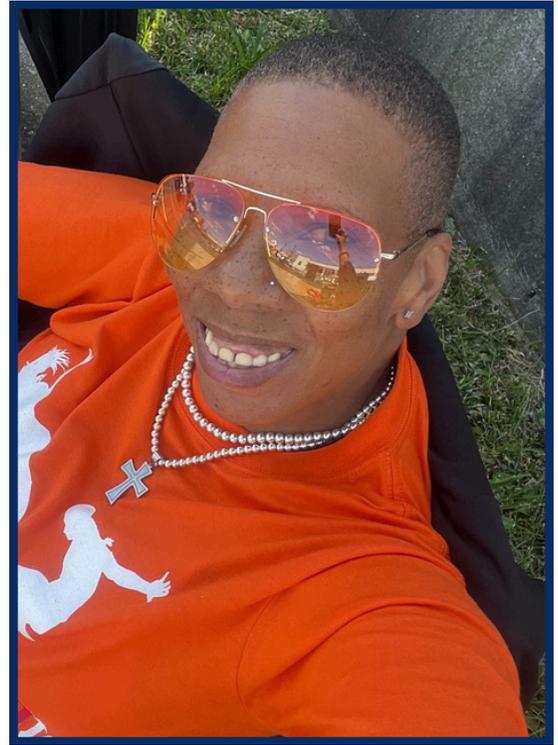


**Mary Grace and her team at her October Breast Cancer Fundraiser**

# Why I Give: Trudi Johnson

When a devastating workplace accident left Trudi Johnson's foot crushed and severed by a forklift, she arrived at University Hospital terrified of what she might lose.

From the moment she entered the Emergency Department, the team sprang into action, making sure she felt cared for, supported, and heard. She particularly remembers her physician's honesty, which helped her feel informed and reassured during a frightening time. The emergency and podiatry teams' quick response, she says, saved her foot. "If I hadn't been taken there, I know my foot would be gone, or worse, by now."



Trudi's recovery journey embodies the strength and resilience of our patients and community. She overcame immense challenges, regained her ability to walk and reclaimed her independence. Grateful for the exceptional care that preserved her mobility, Trudi now gives back as a donor, ensuring others facing traumatic injuries receive the same life-saving, multi-disciplinary support she did.

*"I'm going to go back to what I know, and that's giving back to people any way I can. We're only here to help each other."*

**- Trudi Johnson**



# Message from the Chief Development Officer

Friends,

As the year winds down, I find myself humbled by your support. Your donations are essential to ensuring patients receive exceptional care today, while also investing in tomorrow's innovation.

Because of you, University Hospital is a place where hope and healing meet every day. Your gifts are strengthening healthcare across our community; from maternal and child health to trauma education and training, you are ensuring patients of all ages receive the high-quality, compassionate care they deserve.

This past year has proven what's possible when generosity and purpose come together. We are not only building a stronger hospital, but a healthier future for Newark and for New Jersey. We remain deeply committed to serving our community, where every person who walks through our doors is met with care, dignity, and compassion.

We are grateful for your trust, inspired by your partnership, and energized for all that lies ahead. There is still so much good to be done — and because of you, we are ready to accomplish even more in the year ahead.

Thank you for believing in a future where every person receives exceptional healthcare. Have a joyful holiday season and a healthy, happy New Year.

With gratitude,



**Jess Backofen**

Chief Development Officer  
University Hospital Foundation



# Upcoming Events

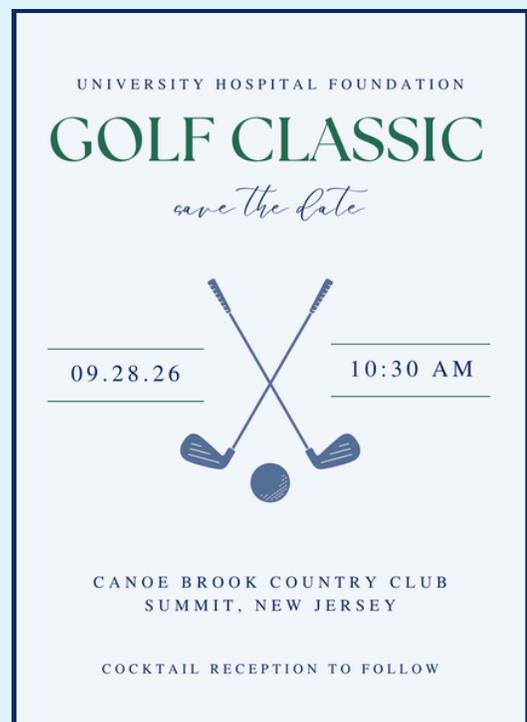
## Toast & Tribute

Join us for an unforgettable evening at Toast & Tribute, our signature cocktail fundraiser celebrating the remarkable individuals and organizations making a difference at University Hospital.



## Golf Classic

Tee off with us at University Hospital Foundation's Annual Golf Classic, where philanthropy meets the fairway to support life-saving initiatives and innovative patient care.



# Contact Us



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