

imagine

A WINNING ASSIST IN FIGHTING PEDIATRIC CANCER

Over a decade ago, Chris Hegardt was treated for cancer at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. Now he's a college soccer standout, and through the Names Family Foundation his family is giving more kids a chance to thrive.

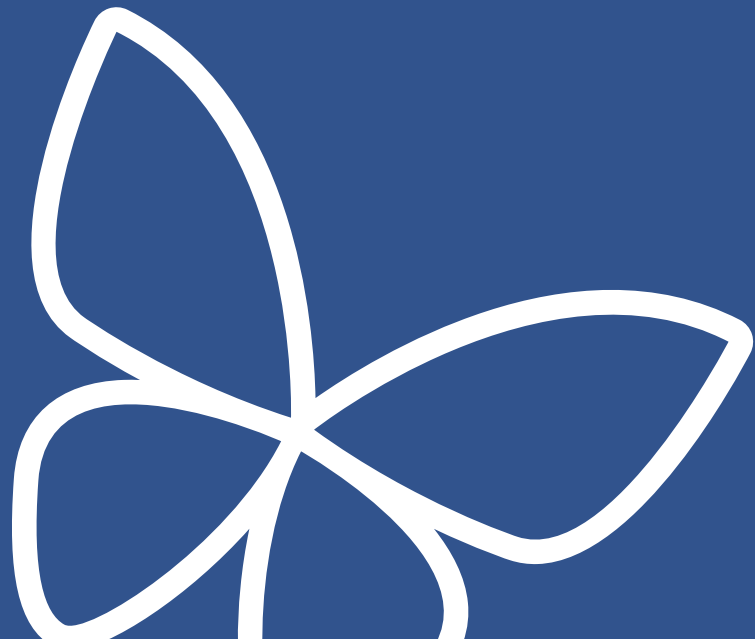


Read about his inspirational journey.



WE CREATE HOPE AND BUILD HEALTHIER FUTURES.

Founded in 1901, Children's Hospital Los Angeles is the highest-ranked pediatric hospital in California and fifth in the nation on the prestigious U.S. News & World Report Honor Roll of best children's hospitals. U.S. News ranks Children's Hospital Los Angeles in all 10 specialty categories. Clinical care at the hospital is led by physicians who are faculty members of the Keck School of Medicine of USC through an affiliation dating from 1932. The hospital also operates the largest pediatric residency training program at a freestanding children's hospital in the Western United States. The Saban Research Institute of Children's Hospital Los Angeles is home to all basic, translational, clinical and community research conducted at the hospital, allowing proven discoveries to quickly reach patients. Our mission: to create hope and build healthier futures.



CELEBRATING RESILIENCE TOGETHER

Children's Hospital Los Angeles is driven by a clear mission: to create hope and build healthier futures for children. Every day, medical providers strive to heal patients with serious illnesses, researchers focus on discoveries to enhance care—and all team members support families in their greatest time of need. More than a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, that commitment to children's health remains resolute.

This issue of Imagine spotlights something that is now universal but has always been rooted in our institution's foundation: resilience. That fortitude to face challenge after challenge, including tackling a multitude of pediatric diseases, seeking innovative treatments and serving some of the most vulnerable children, can only be done with a resilient mindset—and with you, our philanthropic partners.

The articles you will read in the following pages explore generous gifts fueled by individuals who themselves have demonstrated resilience—and who are making investments that will foster this same quality at CHLA, enabling us to move forward during and after difficult times.

Our cover story features the Names Family Foundation, founded by Scott and Evelyn (Sis) Names to champion athletics, health and wellness-focused causes that improve lives. The couple, who weathered the Great Depression, became successful business owners and quietly gave back for years to a variety of nonprofit organizations. Their legacy lives on through their family foundation, which recently made a significant gift to Children's Hospital Los Angeles, and their granddaughter Kim Hegardt, who serves as the foundation's president and whose son beat a rare form of cancer thanks to experts at our hospital.

We are also honored to share how donors have bolstered the hospital's new Behavioral Health Initiative to meet our patients' cognitive, emotional and behavioral health needs. Although this

effort has been in development for some time, the rise in anxiety and other stressors due to the pandemic makes the initiative an even more pressing priority.

In addition, you will see how Children's Hospital Los Angeles has remained resilient in the fight against childhood cancer through a decades-long collaboration with the Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation. And we are pleased to share the stories of Yervant Demirjian, a father who channeled his gratitude for the cancer treatment his child received into a substantial planned gift, and award-winning TV producer Chuck Lorre, whose support is inspiring a new generation of physicians and scientists.

As you read this issue, we hope you take pride in knowing that your generosity helps Children's Hospital Los Angeles fulfill its life-changing mission. Thank you so much for your compassionate support.

Warmest regards,



Paul S. Viviano

Paul S. Viviano
President and
Chief Executive Officer



Alex Carter

Alexandra Carter
Senior Vice President and
Chief Development Officer



According to U.S. News & World Report, Children's Hospital Los Angeles is:

- No. 5 in the Nation
- Ranked in All 10 Specialties
- The Highest-Ranked Children's Hospital West of the Rocky Mountains

In this issue

Spring 2021

COVER STORY

6 A WINNING ASSIST IN FIGHTING PEDIATRIC CANCER

Over a decade ago, Chris Hegardt was treated for cancer at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. Now he's a college soccer standout, and through the Names Family Foundation his family is giving more kids a chance to thrive.



FEATURES

4 PROLIFIC TV CREATOR CHUCK LORRE TAKES GIVING SERIOUSLY

The award-winning producer shares why he supports Children's Hospital Los Angeles—and a new generation of physicians and scientists.

10 DONORS HELP ADDRESS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEED

Several donations—including a landmark \$25 million gift—support a suite of services to address the cognitive, emotional and behavioral health needs of patients.

14 A PARTNERSHIP IS MAKING A 'HUGE IMPACT' ON CHILDHOOD CANCER

Jeri Wilson, Executive Director of the Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation, answers five questions.

16 A FATHER GIVES THANKS TO CHLA FOR SAVING HIS SON'S LIFE

Yervant Demirjian, whose son is almost fully recovered from leukemia, has made a generous planned gift to Children's Hospital Los Angeles.



10



14



16

DEPARTMENTS

18 CHLA Happenings

23 Upcoming Events

25 Board of Directors and Foundation Board of Trustees



18



21

See how our supporters engage with patients.

Imagine

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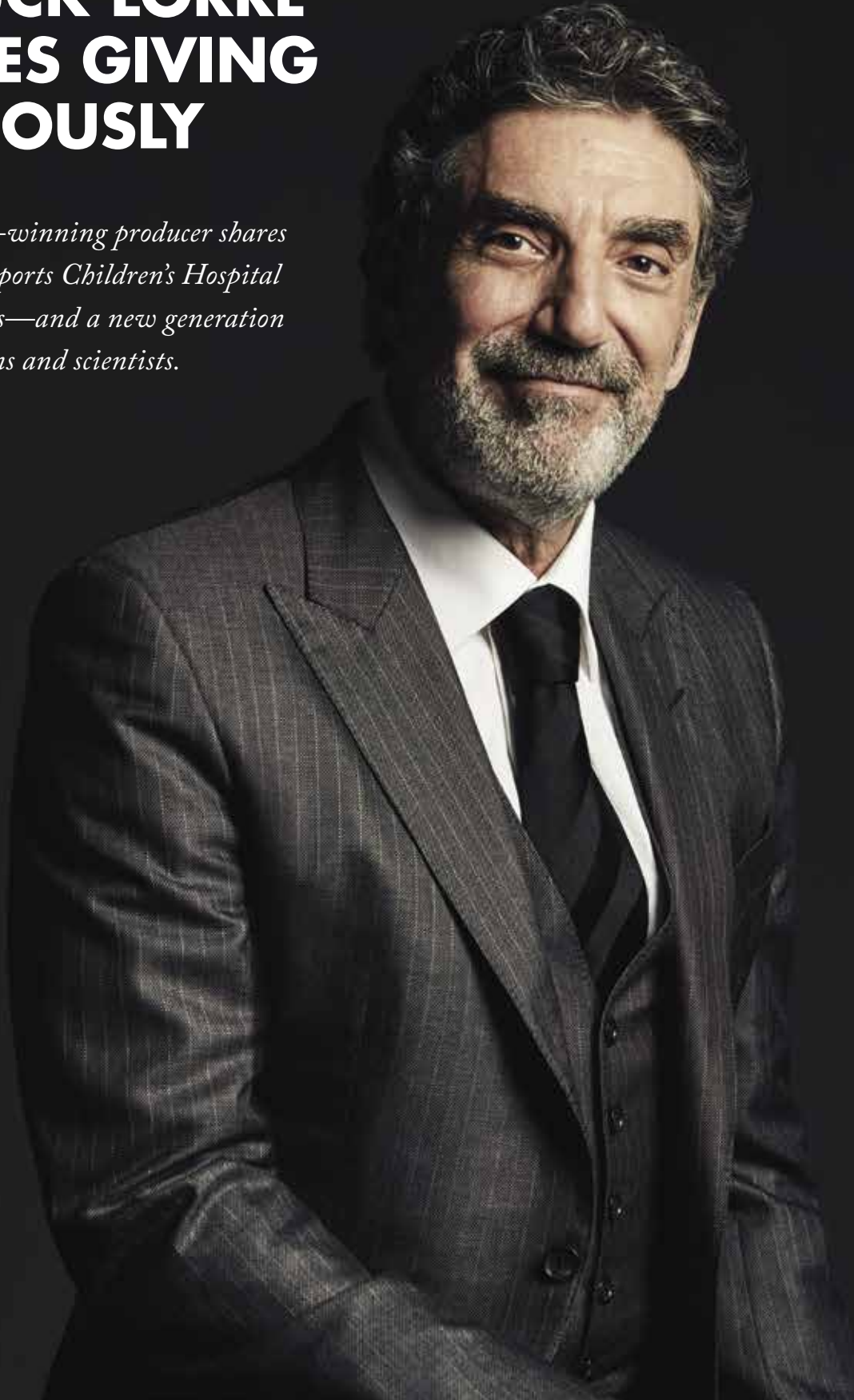
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PROLIFIC TV CREATOR CHUCK LORRE TAKES GIVING SERIOUSLY

The award-winning producer shares why he supports Children's Hospital Los Angeles—and a new generation of physicians and scientists.

By Marla Lehner



Writer, director and producer Chuck Lorre has created some of the most beloved sitcoms of the last several decades, including “The Big Bang Theory,” “Young Sheldon,” “Two and a Half Men,” “Cybill” and “Dharma & Greg.” His newest series include “The Kominsky Method,” “Bob Hearts Abishola,” “B Positive” and “United States of Al.” While Lorre’s main ambition is to make audiences laugh, he’s also serious about his role as a philanthropist.

The Chuck Lorre Family Foundation has donated generously to Children’s Hospital Los Angeles through long-term grants in support of the Samuels Family Latino and African American High School Internship Program (LA-HIP), a career development program for underrepresented high school students studying science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Additionally, in 2020, Lorre gave a generous gift to the COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund.

Asked why he supports the hospital, Lorre says succinctly, “The answer is painfully simple. It’s a wonderful organization. It does great work—and I wanted to be part of it.”

An early experience

But there is something more driving Lorre’s philanthropic efforts—memories of a time in which he had to fight to reclaim his own health as a young man. Lorre was in his early 20s and living in Los Angeles when he was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis. Without medical insurance, it was a scary period for him.

“I was very, very ill and I had nowhere to go. It was a frightening time,” says Lorre. “So, when I began this journey as a philanthropist, I wanted to do something, if I could, to help others avoid going through what I did. Children’s Hospital provides for everyone who walks through the doors, and that’s really important to me.”

When Lorre created his foundation, his philanthropic mission was clear. “From the beginning, I wanted my foundation to focus on education and health. They are both integral to having a life worth

living,” he says. “Children’s Hospital Los Angeles felt like a natural fit, especially the LA-HIP program, which brings together education and health in one very worthwhile environment. I thought, ‘Yes! Let’s do this. Let’s be part of this.’”

A guiding light

While Lorre is hands-on in his foundation’s work, he has help determining where to direct his funding to make the greatest impact. Trisha Cardoso, President and Chief Giving Officer of the Chuck Lorre Family Foundation and also a member of the CHLA Foundation Board of Trustees, has worked with the producer from the beginning to identify ways to fulfill the foundation’s goals.



▲ **Chuck Lorre and Trisha Cardoso, President and Chief Giving Officer of the Chuck Lorre Family Foundation**

“Chuck has had a very specific vision from day one, so that makes it easy to find opportunities,” says Cardoso. “For example, we recognize that it’s harder for minority students to have access to high-quality programs to build their college resumes. Through LA-HIP at CHLA, the playing field is leveled and allows these students to compete with their peers as they prepare for their college journeys. That piqued Chuck’s interest immediately.”

Influencing career choices

STEM education, particularly for underserved students, is a top priority for Lorre, who discovered—to his surprise—that one of his most popular shows was influencing young audiences.

“During the 12 years that I wrote and worked on ‘The Big Bang Theory,’ we discovered that the series was encouraging younger viewers to pursue the STEM fields,” says Lorre. “We set out to make a situation comedy, and we were actually impacting kids’ choices about what kind of life they were going to have and the careers they might pursue.”

Inspired by the impact of his hit show, Lorre established The Big Bang Theory Scholarship Endowment and Graduate Fellowship at the University of California, Los Angeles, which provides both undergraduate and graduate students with financial need-based scholarships to pursue STEM degrees.

“Supporting the LA-HIP program at Children’s Hospital was a natural outgrowth of that,” says Lorre. “We wanted to help high school students learn about the medical field from world-class doctors and researchers while having the opportunity to work in one of the nation’s top children’s hospitals.”

While Lorre’s sitcom has had an unexpected impact on young people’s careers, contributing to causes he believes in has also had a profound impact on Lorre himself.

Giving back “creates joy,” he says. “It’s different from just happy; it’s deeper than happy; it’s more meaningful. The zeros [on the donation] aren’t as critical as the action of trying to be of service to someone else.

“There’s joy in it—and it’s more long-lasting than winning a People’s Choice Award,” he says with a laugh. “I’m grateful for those acknowledgments, too, but giving back is more impactful, especially when I can see it and be part of it and meet the people doing the amazing work.” 🦋

“When I started to write situation comedies 35 years ago, I never imagined that I would be in a position like I am to give back. This feels like the right thing to do, to say ‘thank you’ to the universe for giving me the opportunity.”

—Chuck Lorre

A WINNING ASSIST IN FIGHTING PEDIATRIC CANCER

Over a decade ago, Chris Hegardt was treated for cancer at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. Now he's a college soccer standout, and through the Names Family Foundation his family is giving more kids a chance to thrive.

By Katie Sweeney



It's just past noon on a spring-like Tuesday in early March in Washington, D.C., and Chris Hegardt is about to run out from his dorm to grab a quick lunch. From there, he'll be heading across the Georgetown University campus for soccer practice.

The 19-year-old freshman is a center midfielder for Georgetown—one of the top NCAA Division I soccer teams in the country and the 2019 NCAA men's national champions. But at the moment, Chris is talking about philanthropy, not sports.



▲ **Kim and Ron Hegardt**

"It means a lot that our family has the opportunity to give back," he says. "It feels really good to help out others."

Chris is referring to the Names Family Foundation, which was started in 1996 by his great-grandparents, Scott and Evelyn (Sis) Names, in Tacoma, Washington. The foundation supports health and wellness through athletics and physical education, mostly in the Tacoma area. But it also has spent nearly a decade giving to a cause very close to his family's heart: Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

"We are forever grateful to Children's Hospital Los Angeles," says Chris' mom,

Kim Hegardt, President of the Names Family Foundation and a member of the CHLA Foundation Board of Trustees. "If we hadn't found Dr. Mascarenhas, I don't think Chris would be alive today."

Recently, the foundation gave its second \$1 million gift to support the Names Family Foundation Early Phase Clinical Trials Program in the Cancer and Blood Disease Institute at CHLA.

"Research is a core focus at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, and I am deeply grateful to the Names Family Foundation for its generous support," says Paul S. Viviano, President and CEO of Children's Hospital. "The family's story is an incredible example of how our institution's expertise and commitment to advancing pediatric cancer research can make all the difference in a child's life. In turn, the foundation's philanthropy has supported further study that allows our scientists to contribute new knowledge to the field."

A fateful hit

Even as a young boy, Chris' abilities on the soccer field attracted attention. One of his coaches once told ESPN.com that he believed Chris was one of the best players in his age group—in the entire country.

Chris was obsessed with the sport. He slept in his uniform the night before games, and he spent endless hours kicking and dribbling the ball in the backyard of the family's Fallbrook, California, home.

But on Dec. 5, 2009, at a weekend tournament in San Diego, Chris' life took an unthinkable turn.

With 15 minutes to go in the team's first game, a ball hit Chris, then 7, straight in the stomach—hard. He collapsed.

On the sidelines, he was having trouble breathing and was sick to his stomach. His dad, Ron Hegardt, took him to a nearby emergency room.

A scan revealed stunning news: Chris' liver was riddled with cancerous tumors. The

soccer ball had ruptured one of them, and he was bleeding internally. He underwent emergency surgery to stop the bleeding at a San Diego hospital, and doctors broke the news to his parents.

"It was a conversation like, 'Sorry to have to tell you this,'" remembers Ron. "It wasn't, 'He's got cancer and we're going to beat it.' It was ... almost like a death sentence. We weren't prepared for that. No parent is prepared for that."

Unfortunately, doctors could not determine what kind of liver cancer Chris had. The Hegardts were willing to go anywhere in the world to find an expert who could help. As it turned out, that expert was Leo Mascarenhas, MD, MS—and he was only a couple of hours away at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

Dr. Mascarenhas, Deputy Director of the Cancer and Blood Disease Institute at CHLA, was "99.99% sure" that Chris had an extremely rare form of liver cancer that had only recently been described in scientific literature. He had treated a handful of children with that cancer, and he knew of a few cases in Europe.

"He laid out a plan for us, not around extending life but around trying to save his life," Ron says. "We left that night and said, 'This is where we're going.'"

"We are forever grateful to Children's Hospital Los Angeles. If we hadn't found Dr. Mascarenhas, I don't think Chris would be alive today."

—Kim Hegardt,
Chris' mom
and President
of the Names
Family Foundation



At CHLA, Chris underwent three months of chemotherapy and received a lifesaving liver transplant performed by Yuri Genyk, MD, now Chief of the Division of Abdominal Transplantation at CHLA. After three more months of chemotherapy, Chris completed his treatment. His cancer was gone.

The next month, he was back on the pitch. And by March 2011—a year after his transplant—he was nailing a clutch, game-tying penalty kick with just minutes to go in the State Cup final, the biggest soccer tournament in California. His team, the San Diego Surf, won the title.

Chris was named Most Valuable Player.

Advancing new treatments

Soon after Chris' treatment, Kim and Ron looked for ways to give back to the

hospital that had saved their son's life. The Names Family Foundation was the perfect vehicle.

Scott and Sis Names were Kim's grandparents, and both had been lifelong sports enthusiasts. Coming from humble beginnings, Scott and Sis married during the Great Depression and started a successful sporting goods store near Tacoma. In 1971, they became early investors in a start-up athletic shoe company in Oregon that became a global giant: Nike.

Scott and Sis channeled their business success into helping others. Kim and Ron wanted to do the same thing: express their gratitude for Chris' recovery by helping to advance cancer treatment for other children.

Initially, the Names Family Foundation supported Dr. Mascarenhas' research into pediatric liver cancers. The support gave him the funding he needed to conduct the largest case study to date on hepatocellular malignant neoplasm-NOS (HEMNOS)—the rare cancer Chris had. The resulting paper, published in 2017, more clearly defined the cancer and outlined the successful treatment strategy used at CHLA.

"Previously these patients were thought to do poorly, but our patients had all done well and achieved remission," Dr. Mascarenhas says.

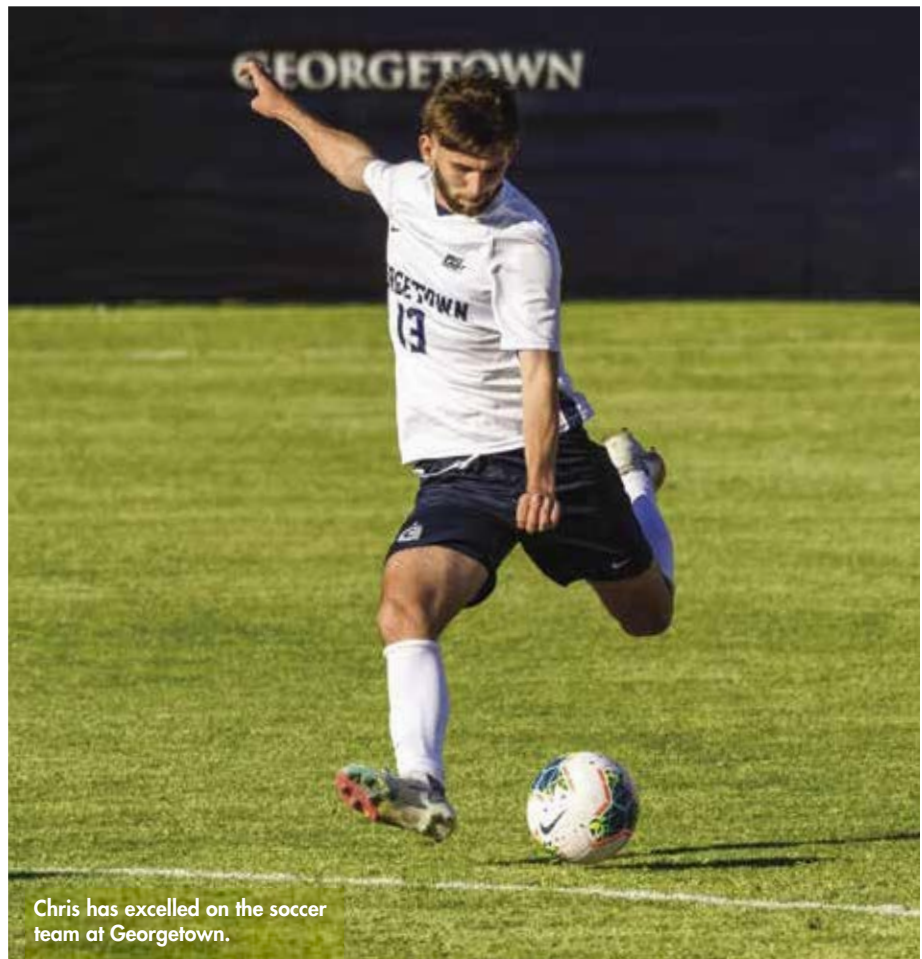
In 2016, the foundation expanded its support with a \$1 million gift establishing the Names Family Foundation Early Phase Clinical Trials Program in the



▲ Chris during treatment at CHLA



▲ As a child, Chris spent endless hours practicing soccer and was considered among the best players in his age group.



Chris has excelled on the soccer team at Georgetown.

“The funding is really instrumental in bringing new treatments to patients who need them the most—those who have relapsed or who are not responding to standard therapies.”

—Leo Mascarenhas, MD, MS,
Deputy Director of the Cancer and
Blood Disease Institute at CHLA



Cancer and Blood Disease Institute. Recently, the foundation continued its commitment with another \$1 million gift to the program.

“This funding is really instrumental in bringing new treatments to patients who need them the most—those who have relapsed or who are not responding to standard therapies,” explains Dr. Mascarenhas, who leads the program.

Many of the trials are developed and initiated by investigators at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. The novel therapies being tested—for solid tumors and leukemias—are also designed to be less toxic than traditional regimens. Current trials include studies on immunotherapy and therapies that target cancer-specific genetic alterations.

“Finding avenues that go beyond chemotherapy and use your own body to heal, your own immune system—that’s exciting,” says Kim. “We are thrilled to support this important research.”

Dr. Mascarenhas is also continuing to study HEMNOS and other pediatric liver cancers. The next step: conduct genetic analysis on these tumors to try to predict how patients will respond to treatment. The goal is to boost treatment effectiveness in children who are less likely to respond.

“Philanthropic support is what really helps us to get new discoveries into patients,” he adds. “Ultimately, that is what is going to move the field forward.”

“I just thought about it like, it’s just a little bump in the road. I had the right mindset—that you can overcome anything.”

—Chris Hegardt



Going for his goal

For Dr. Mascarenhas, seeing Chris achieve his dreams on the soccer field is the ultimate reward.

“It’s why I do what I do,” he says simply.

Chris, meanwhile, has continued to play soccer at the highest levels. He spent two years as a starter for the Seattle Sounders FC Academy team and played with the

Seattle Sounders professional team during the 2020 preseason. As a freshman at Georgetown, he scored two game-winning goals in the first four games of 2021—including one that earned him Big East Freshman of the Week honors.

Chris has never let his early experience with cancer dampen his ambitions. Looking ahead, his next goal is to become a pro soccer player after college. “I’ve always loved soccer,” he says. “I’ve been playing for so long, it feels like my life.”

Getting hit by that soccer ball all those years ago very likely saved his life—identifying a hidden cancer before it had spread to other organs. But he admits that, at age 7, he didn’t understand the gravity of what was happening. And that was a good thing.

“I just thought about it like, it’s just a little bump in the road,” he says. “I had the right mindset—that you can overcome anything.” 🦋

DONORS HELP ADDRESS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEED

Several donations—including a landmark \$25 million gift—support a suite of services to meet the cognitive, emotional and behavioral health needs of patients at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles.

By Marla Lehner



Just as the coronavirus was making its way through countries and across continents, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles was launching a comprehensive behavioral health initiative to support patients and their families.

Pediatric behavioral health care is an area of medicine that has been vastly underserved. While the pandemic brought issues related to stress, isolation and

anxiety—especially in children—into the national spotlight, CHLA experts had already been strategizing ways to expand supportive services for patients.

The result: a five-year plan to improve outcomes and support the overall long-term resilience of families through a new Behavioral Health Initiative. When the pandemic hit, and as hospitals across the nation wondered how to scale back their

offerings, CHLA leaders were asking themselves a different set of questions: Can we move faster? What can we do now to address the pressing needs we see in our patients?

“We had been planning the Behavioral Health Initiative. Then, COVID-19 arrived and we saw the need begin to increase,” says Ashish Buttan, Executive Director of the Neurological Institute and

Behavioral Health Initiative at Children’s Hospital. “We realized this is when people really need us and we need to respond.”

The institution-wide effort has received several strong boosts from an array of philanthropic partners—including an anonymous \$25 million gift in January 2021. The transformational donation will support a suite of services across the hospital, new behavioral health training and education, technology and research aimed at improving access to behavioral health services, and much more.

Addressing a growing need

While the pandemic revealed a lack of accessible behavioral health care for children, the need has been growing for over a decade. A host of factors—particularly rising suicide rates in children and a 15%-20% decrease in availability of behavioral services for children in California—motivated Children’s Hospital Los Angeles to address that shortage by bringing together multiple disciplines, including psychiatry, psychology, developmental pediatrics and social work, to form an inclusive ecosystem of specialty care.

Under the new initiative, CHLA will ensure that all patients referred to the hospital with another primary diagnosis have access to behavioral health care to

support their overall well-being. As part of this effort, CHLA opened a post-discharge psychiatric clinic, the first of its kind in California, in April 2020. Many patients have ongoing behavioral health needs after leaving the hospital and previously had few options to address those issues.



▲ **Ashish Buttan, Executive Director of the Neurological Institute and Behavioral Health Initiative**

“Through the post-discharge psychiatric clinic, patients now continue to be seen until they are stabilized from a behavioral health standpoint,” says Buttan. “Or we work with the family to connect them to a permanent resource in their community. This has been really well-received by patients and families.”

As another resource for patients being seen at CHLA, a new outpatient behavioral health clinic opened in May 2020. The clinic, which has conducted more than

1,500 virtual visits, is staffed by a multidisciplinary team of specialists who work with patients to address their mental and emotional health needs. A new space for in-person visits is scheduled to open this summer.

The initiative also includes the implementation of mental health screenings for every patient who comes to the hospital.

And a pilot program to integrate behavioral health directly into the Children’s Hospital Los Angeles Care Network—composed of more than 200 community pediatricians across three counties—is being planned. The pilot will begin by embedding a social worker into two pediatrician practices in the community.

“Our goal is to help identify children who may have behavioral health issues early, then provide timely interventions to prevent a more serious mental health diagnosis from developing,” says Bhavana Arora, MD, Chief Medical Officer of the Children’s Hospital Los Angeles Care Network.

Philanthropic support is key to every aspect of the Behavioral Health Initiative and will help Children’s Hospital Los Angeles realize its vision of creating an integrated behavioral health care delivery model to serve thousands of children.

“Given the commitment that our hospital has to providing the highest-quality medical and surgical care for children, it is thrilling to be able to begin to pair this with a similar level of commitment to care for behavioral health,” says Lara Khouri, Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer. “This incredible philanthropic support will help us extend services to every child we treat.” 🌈



▲ **Lara Khouri, Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer**



Why We GIVE

Paula and Allan Rudnick

ACHIEVING OUR BEST TOGETHER

In addition to an anonymous \$25 million gift to support the Behavioral Health Initiative, many other philanthropists have chosen to support these vital services. At Children's Hospital Los Angeles, we believe we achieve our best when we work together to care for children and serve the community.

"We are grateful for every donor who joins us in supporting the best health care for kids," says Alexandra Carter, Senior Vice President and Chief Development Officer at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. "One of the things that makes our hospital so special is our extended family of supporters. We appreciate each and every one."



Paula and Allan Rudnick, longtime supporters of CHLA, have made a significant donation to the Behavioral Health Initiative. In their own words, they explain why they were moved to support this expansion of services.

"The role of Children's Hospital Los Angeles in the community is to be a leader and an educator in pediatric health. That applies to treating children with acute illness and to setting the standards of healthy behavior physically, emotionally and mentally. Allan and I understand the value of services that support children's bodies and minds—and we're happy to support behavioral health services at Children's Hospital."

—Paula Rudnick

"Because of the pandemic and because of the difficulty we've seen related to school issues, isolation and rising suicide rates, this is a medical crisis. That's a big reason why we decided to give to behavioral health at this time. As in other areas of pediatric medicine, Children's Hospital Los Angeles is leading the way. I predict that in the years to come, other hospitals will follow CHLA's lead."

—Allan M. Rudnick, a member of the CHLA Foundation Board of Trustees

Myrna and George Weisenfeld



For Myrna and George Weisenfeld, the issue of mental health has always been close to their hearts, and they understand how difficult it can be for families to access appropriate care. CHLA's role serving some of the most vulnerable children in the community is especially meaningful to the couple, who have supported the new Behavioral Health Initiative with a generous donation.

"I care about people and I care about the community, and I know there is a big need. In Los Angeles, there are not nearly enough facilities for families to get help for children,

teens and young people. I'm very interested in helping to support mental health services for young people, and I know Children's Hospital Los Angeles will serve all their patients. It's really an outstanding hospital that serves our community, as well as families who come from many other places to get care."

—Myrna Weisenfeld

"There is a mental health epidemic—not just here but around the country. It's shocking how few behavioral health services there are, even in a metropolitan city like Los Angeles. Even in places that do provide care for kids, it's impossible to get in because they are so busy. Children's Hospital Los Angeles serves a lot of needy people. Our hearts go out to these families. When we heard about this initiative at Children's Hospital, we thought, 'OK, we want to help open the doors to something like this.' We hope it will grow and mushroom into something even bigger."

—George Weisenfeld

WELCOME TO THE NEUROLOGICAL INSTITUTE OUTPATIENT CENTER



On April 19, 2021, Children's Hospital Los Angeles welcomed patients to the new Neurological Institute Outpatient Center. The family-friendly 23,000-square-foot space, made possible thanks to support from philanthropic partners, brings together experts in neurology and neurosurgery, along with specialists in rehabilitation, psychology, diet therapy, social work and genetic counseling to provide comprehensive neurologic care all under one roof. The new center is among just a few in the country to offer a wide range of outpatient services—including 34 patient exam rooms, two waiting rooms, a state-of-the-art EEG lab and a dedicated playroom—in a centralized location for children with neurological conditions.

In addition, specialists from around the hospital collaborate with neuroscience experts in nearly 20 subspecialties to provide care for children with any neurological issues, including epilepsy, neuromuscular disorders, craniofacial disorders, brachial plexus injuries and neuro-oncology needs. The Neurological Institute Outpatient Center gives our care teams the space to double the number of patients treated annually. It also provides families with access to multiple specialists during a single visit to streamline care and make appointments more convenient and efficient. 🌈

A PARTNERSHIP IS MAKING A 'HUGE IMPACT' ON CHILDHOOD CANCER

5 Questions for Jeri Wilson, Executive Director of the Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation

By Sara Nafie



▲ Jeri Wilson

As a leading pediatric academic medical center, Children's Hospital Los Angeles is committed to improving children's health—and research plays a vital role in fostering scientific innovation. The hospital has benefited from a decades-long partnership with the Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation (PCRF), which has awarded more than \$2 million in grants to investigators in the Cancer and Blood Disease Institute (CBDI) at Children's Hospital. Jeri Wilson, Executive Director of PCRF, discusses the impact of this meaningful collaboration.

1 In what ways does the partnership with Children's Hospital Los Angeles help support the Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation's mission?

In a nutshell, by advancing research at a rapid pace. Children's Hospital has investigators working at all levels of research that we can support; every single project we've invested in at CHLA has shown us a positive return. Collectively we are having a huge impact: Since our inception in 1982, survival rates for childhood cancer have risen from 10% to over 80%. At the same time, PCRF believes that when it comes to research for a child, you need to take care of the whole family. It isn't just what happens at the bench and the bedside. It's also what happens through social workers, Child Life, pet therapy. The comprehensive, family-centered care Children's Hospital provides is definitely something we want to be part of and are proud to support.

2 What made Children's Hospital Los Angeles stand out as an institution that PCRF wanted to support?

One thing that was super attractive was that both of our organizations are based in Southern California. We want to be invested in the geographic areas where our donors are. But of course it was more than that—it was CHLA's level of excellence.



3 How has PCRF's partnership with Children's Hospital grown through the years?

In 2010, we established the PCRF Clinical Trials Program, which has allowed us to support exciting research led by Leo Mascarenhas, MD, MS [Deputy Director of the CBDI], and other innovators in pediatric cancer research. Most recently we supported Yong-Mi Kim, MD, PhD, MPH, in her work with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, and Anat Erdreich-Epstein, MD, PhD, in her work with medulloblastoma. What is unique is that, previously, we had never funded more than one researcher from an institution at the same time. CHLA's research has consistently been rated so highly that we made the decision to do that, which makes me really happy.



"I am extremely grateful to Pediatric Cancer Research Foundation for its long-standing, generous support of CBDI investigators as they work to develop improved therapies for children with cancer."

—Alan S. Wayne, MD, Director, Cancer and Blood Disease Institute, and the Alfred E. Mann Family Foundation Chair in Cancer Research

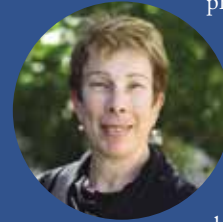
4 How has the collaboration between the foundation and CHLA helped both organizations succeed?

We like to think we've launched some emerging researchers at CHLA who have taken discoveries from the basic science lab to translational research studies—and ultimately to clinical trials protocols. When Dr. Alan Wayne came to CHLA [in 2013 as Director of the Cancer and Blood Disease Institute], he really turned up the burners, recruiting from left, right and center from other major institutions, including some researchers that PCRf had already supported. That was very exciting to see.

5 How does the foundation decide where to allocate grant funding?

Every decision is guided by PCRf's mission: to identify and fund leading-edge research that promises the best hope for a cure to childhood cancer. We don't just fund one type of cancer; we fund all of them. So while there's no exact formula, we want to support investigators who are conducting research into a variety of diseases. Also, when we started nearly 40 years ago in Orange County, we had a Southern California focus. As PCRf grows, we want to be at the forefront of the fight against cancer by advancing research across the country. 🦋

Anat Erdreich-Epstein, MD, PhD, is a physician-scientist in the



Cancer and Blood Disease Institute whose research has been supported by PCRf. In addition to caring for children with brain cancer through the years, Dr. Erdreich-Epstein is a Principal Investigator in The Saban Research Institute of Children's Hospital Los Angeles. In 2014, her lab discovered that a little-known gene called PID1 acts as the brakes in brain cancer by slowing tumor growth, and its presence in higher amounts is associated with longer survival in patients with medulloblastomas, gliomas and atypical teratoid rhabdoid tumors. She is now dissecting the molecular mechanisms by which PID1 functions, with the ultimate goal of using the new knowledge to improve brain tumor treatment.

Yong-Mi Kim, MD, PhD, MPH, a researcher



in the Cancer and Blood Disease Institute and a Principal Investigator in The Saban Research Institute of Children's Hospital Los Angeles whose work has been supported by PCRf, is

helping to advance our understanding of acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), the most common form of childhood cancer. Although many children treated for ALL are cured, a significant number are resistant to chemotherapy or relapse after initial success. Dr. Kim's lab recently discovered that a Velcro-like protein called integrin $\alpha 6$ helps anchor leukemia cells in the bone marrow—known to be a safe haven for cancer cells—but when it is blocked, chemotherapy is more effective. Moreover, when integrin $\alpha 6$ was genetically deleted, some cancer cells died with no chemotherapy at all. Dr. Kim's exciting findings may be translated to treat other cancers if they are found to share similar drug resistance pathways.

A FATHER GIVES THANKS TO CHLA FOR SAVING HIS SON'S LIFE

Yervant Demirjian with sons Anthony (left) and Sarkis ▶



▲ Yervant and Anthony at Children's Hospital Los Angeles



Yervant Demirjian's son is nearly free of leukemia. In gratitude, Demirjian has made a generous planned gift to Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

By Jeff Weinstock

“Can I open my spreadsheet?” Yervant Demirjian asks, looking to retrieve an answer to a question about his son Anthony’s medication.

His spreadsheet serves as a warehouse for every data point of 6-year-old Anthony’s leukemia treatment at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. Every chemo cycle is documented, every infusion date, every white blood cell count, every CT scan report.

“The whole thing started on 3-28-17 and ended on 8-7-20,” Demirjian says, reading off the dates and then the final tally. “That’s 1,228 days of therapy. So he had about 200 doses of steroids. No, 400 doses of steroids—200 in the morning and 200 at night.”

Not all of what the spreadsheet provides him is numerical. It’s also the reference Demirjian consults to calm his anxiety, work out his own need for precision, and gain a feeling of assurance that he has some say over his son’s prognosis.

“You know what, it’s a coping mechanism. The more hands-on I am with the protocols, the better I can cope,” he says.

Under the care of oncologist Etan Orgel, MD, an attending physician in the Cancer and Blood Disease Institute at Children’s Hospital, Anthony is doing well, nearing three years without any reappearance of leukemia. He goes for regular checkups and blood draws at the hospital to check for signs of the disease’s return.

“So far he’s good,” Demirjian says. He cites the help of Anthony’s mom, Melissa, as instrumental in his son’s treatment. “This has been a family battle.”

A trio of donations

A successful banker and developer, Demirjian has conveyed his gratitude to Children’s Hospital for saving his son’s life through multiple contributions. His most recent, a substantial planned gift designated for the Children’s Fund—

which supports the hospital’s greatest needs at any given time—is his third donation to the hospital in less than two years. Demirjian also made donations in May 2019 and in August 2020, when he used a business connection to arrange the purchase and delivery of 150,000 much-needed surgical masks after the coronavirus pandemic struck.

Along with helping to cure sick children, he hopes his latest gift can help to create advances in cancer care that lessen the toll treatment takes on kids.

“You’re quarantined because you’re vulnerable to infection,” Demirjian says. “You’re weak and you’ve lost your hair, and you don’t want other kids to single you out.” He would love to see his donation “make the whole experience more pleasant for kids.”

Born in Lebanon of Armenian descent, Demirjian came to the U.S. in 1982 to study economics at Pepperdine University, leaving behind a country overcome by war and strife. He says he was pleased with his decision when he saw that what amounted to a crisis in his new country was rain in the forecast on Super Bowl Sunday and its potential impact on the game.

“The biggest problem was: How are we going to dry this football field? As the sportscasters were talking, suddenly you saw two helicopters coming down very low and they started drying the field with the blades of the helicopters. And I said, ‘Wow. If this is the biggest problem this country has, I’m staying here.’”

Now 56, he has turned his success into a means for giving. He says he comes from a tradition of generosity—give to whatever degree you can.

“I’m privileged to have a comfortable life,” he says. “A lot of people are motivated to make money so they can buy a bigger home, buy a plane, buy a



▲ Demirjian’s sons: Sarkis (left) and Anthony

boat. But my motivation is, if I make more money, I can give more money.”

Looking back, counting ahead

It was Demirjian who first noticed his son limping and had a dark premonition about it. “I was thinking leukemia,” he says. “The way I function as a human being is, I always expect the worst.”

Unfortunately, this time his reflexive pessimism was on the mark. When a bone marrow aspirate confirmed the leukemia, “it was like a truck hit me.”

With Anthony now in remission and attending kindergarten, Demirjian is eyeing the decisive five-year threshold, when the chance of the cancer’s return would drop to negligible. On his spreadsheet, Demirjian once counted down the days toward the end of his son’s treatment; now he counts them forward.

“I would wake up and know there are this many days left, and then this many days left,” he says. “Now I know that he finished therapy 175 days ago. When you hear leukemia you automatically assume the worst. But I realized that, yes, there might be salvation. I’m going to be thankful to Children’s Hospital Los Angeles for the rest of my life.” 🦋



Although events have looked different during the COVID-19 pandemic, our philanthropic partners have found new virtual and in-person ways to connect with patients and support our mission to create hope and build healthier futures. Here are just a few happenings that took place over the past several months.



▲ Holiday Tree Lighting

In 2020, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles’ annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony was a star-studded virtual production featuring appearances by Kristen Bell, Dax Shepard, Gwen Stefani, David Foster, Katharine McPhee Foster, Jamie Lee Curtis and many more. The video—which was produced by Lythgoe Family Productions and aired in patient rooms via the hospital’s GetWellNetwork—included musical performances and story time.

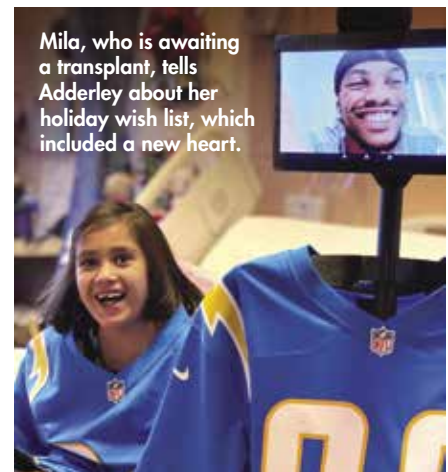
▲ Top: Dax Shepard and Kristen Bell; John Legend
 ▲ Middle: Jamie Lee Curtis; Gwen Stefani
 ▲ Bottom: Katharine McPhee Foster and David Foster; Paul S. Viviano, President and CEO of CHLA, with Santa Claus and CHLA therapy dogs

Santa Claus and Becky Lythgoe, Executive Producer, Lythgoe Family Productions, and a member of the CHLA Foundation Board of Trustees ►

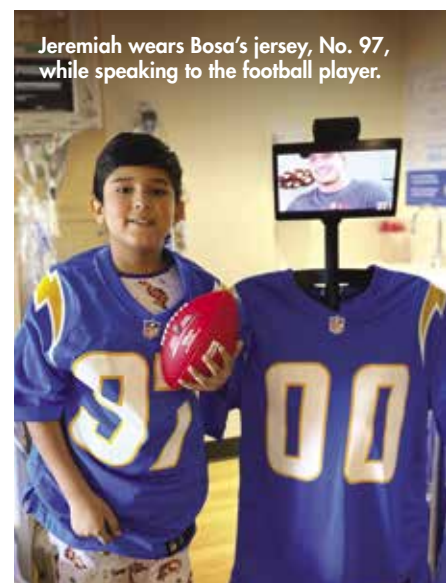


Chatting With the Chargers ▼

On Dec. 8, 2020, patients received a special virtual visit from the Los Angeles Chargers. Safety Nasir Adderley and defensive end Joey Bosa connected with patients at the bedside through Fred the robot before gifting them with jerseys, footballs and games.



Mila, who is awaiting a transplant, tells Adderley about her holiday wish list, which included a new heart.



Jeremiah wears Bosa’s jersey, No. 97, while speaking to the football player.

A Special Visit With CBS Stars ▶

For the past decade, stars from CBS Studios have stopped by the hospital during the holiday season to meet patients and distribute toys. In 2020, celebrities including Whoopi Goldberg, LL Cool J, and James Corden and cast members from shows such as “NCIS” and “SEAL Team” recorded personalized videos for patients, who also received gifts as part of the virtual visit.

Actress Daniela Ruah wished Coco a “warm, wonderful, happy holiday.” ▶



Katherine received a message from actor Brian Dietzen, along with a special gift.



◀ Valentine's Day

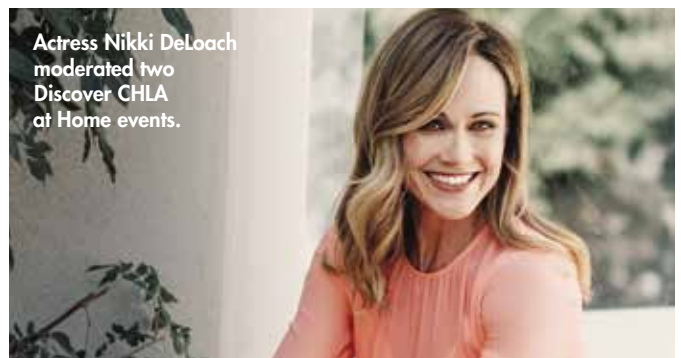
Thanks to our supporters who submitted more than 95,000 cheerful messages, this year's Valentine's Day card campaign was a sweet success. Heart-shaped balloons, goodie bags and cards filled with the encouraging notes were delivered to patients throughout the hospital on Feb. 12, 2021.

◀ Right: Delilah gets a sweet kiss from her mom, Samantha.

◀ Left: Caleb flashes a big smile showing off his “T-rrific” dinosaur cards.

Discover CHLA at Home ▼

Discover CHLA, the hospital's speaker series featuring experts from across the institution, went virtual over the past year. Hosted by Paul S. Viviano, President and Chief Executive Officer of CHLA, the Nov. 19, 2020, live video event focused on COVID-19's impact on education, athletics and children's emotional, behavioral and social needs. The event was moderated by actress Nikki DeLoach, a member of the CHLA Foundation Board of Trustees. For the Feb. 10, 2021, Discover CHLA at Home—also hosted by Viviano and moderated by DeLoach—attendees learned about the hidden dangers of sugar on children's health from endocrinology, gastroenterology and cardiology specialists.





◀ Associates and Affiliates

The Associates and Affiliates of Children’s Hospital Los Angeles—composed of nearly three dozen all-volunteer groups throughout Southern California—are among the institution’s most steadfast supporters. Since 1914, the A&As have raised millions for multiple projects that have impacted all corners of the hospital, from orthopaedics to spiritual care.

◀ In August 2020, the Westside Guild hosted a fundraiser featuring an assortment of fresh flowers from the Flower Truck LA.

◀ Pictured left to right: Nancy Meidel, a member of the CHLA Foundation Board of Trustees; former Westside Guild President Heather Jones; CHLA Junior Ambassador Saira Rahemtulla and her mother, Zaheeda Rahemtulla



▲ On Oct. 6, 2020, the Antelope Valley Guild held its annual Swing to Give a Child Hope golf tournament at the Crystalaire Country Club in Llano, California.



Members of the Flintridge Guild

Top: Kim Kessler, President of the Flintridge Guild
Bottom: Maureen Railsback ▶



◀ Junior Ambassadors Celebration

Throughout the year, CHLA Junior Ambassadors work together to fundraise and represent the hospital in the community. This year’s Junior Ambassadors Celebration, held on Feb. 20, 2021, was a virtual party to celebrate these young philanthropists’ contributions. The event included a talent showcase and an opportunity for the kids and teens to connect with each other. Attendees received a commemorative pin and a special treat in the mail prior to the event.

▲ Top: Blake Meidel
◀ Left: Javen and Saira Rahemtulla



Every March, Southern California businesses and their employees, customers and the community rally around Children's Hospital Los Angeles through the Make March Matter® campaign, which sets a goal of raising \$1 million for the hospital's programs and services. This year's campaign included 108 partners from the restaurant, fitness, sports and shopping industries who hosted their own fundraising activities throughout the month.



▲ On March 1, 2021, actress and longtime CHLA supporter Jamie Lee Curtis helped kick off the campaign. From left to right: Alexandra Carter, CHLA Senior Vice President and Chief Development Officer; Jamie Lee Curtis; Paul S. Viviano, President and Chief Executive Officer of CHLA; and Dawn Wilcox, Vice President, Corporate Partnerships at CHLA



▲ The livestream kickoff event featured the inspiring story of CHLA patient Maverick, who underwent a kidney transplant after being diagnosed with end-stage renal disease.



As part of the campaign, celebrities made virtual visits with patients at the bedside. Pictured here: Nathan with Coldplay's Chris Martin.

▲ Charles & Company Tea donated a percentage of sales from specialty teas all month long and hosted a TalkShopLive event to promote the campaign.



▲ Throughout the month, Panda Express restaurants collected donations at the register, and Panda associates donated a portion of their paychecks.

CREATE A LASTING LEGACY OF CARE



You can create hope and build healthier futures for our children.

When you leave a gift to Children's Hospital Los Angeles in your will or trust, or name the hospital as beneficiary of your retirement account or life insurance policy, you create a legacy that ensures future generations can benefit from CHLA's lifesaving clinical care, innovative research and education. For your gift, you will be recognized as a legacy donor in the Emma Phillips Society. We invite you to become a member of the Children's Hospital Los Angeles family of supporters.

To learn more about including CHLA in your estate plans, please contact Ken Dolbashian, Associate Senior Vice President of Planned Giving, at **323-361-1749** or visit **[CHLA.org/PlannedGiving](https://www.chla.org/PlannedGiving)**.

**Children's
Hospital** 
LOS ANGELES

WHAT'S AHEAD IN 2021

*There are so many ways to support Children's Hospital Los Angeles.
We hope you'll participate in one of the upcoming events
that benefit the hospital's world-class care.*

June 12

Walk and Play L.A. at Home

Join us virtually for the fifth annual 3K walk and family fun festival featuring performances, interactive sports clinics and more—all to benefit Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

To learn more about the event and sign up, visit WalkandPlayLA.com.

October 4

58th Annual Swing to Give a Child Hope Golf Tournament

Held at the Crystallaire Country Club in Llano, California, the Antelope Valley Guild's signature fundraiser to support CHLA includes golf, lunch on the course, a buffet dinner, prizes and more.

For more information, call Crystallaire Country Club: 661-944-2111.

September 10-12

63rd Annual Portuguese Bend National Horse Show

Come watch displays of exciting horsemanship at this fundraiser benefiting CHLA and hosted by the Peninsula Committee in Palos Verdes.

Visit PCCH.net/horseshow for more information.

November 7

Los Angeles Marathon

Children's Hospital Los Angeles is honored to be a charity partner for the Los Angeles Marathon. Run 26.2 miles through the City of Angels, and support the best care for children in the community.

Visit LAMarathon.com for more information.

September 25-26

Malibu Triathlon

Swim, bike and run (or make a donation in honor of those who do) in support of pediatric cancer research at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

To register or learn more, visit MalibuTri.com.

November 30

Giving Tuesday

Support the hospital on the day dedicated to giving and tune in to KOST 103.5 to hear radio host Ellen K share stories from Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

To support the hospital, visit CHLA.org/give.

CHLA is committed to maintaining a healthy, safe environment and prioritizes the well-being of our community. At the time of printing, the events listed here are scheduled to proceed. However, event dates and formats are subject to change in accordance with state and local guidance related to COVID-19.

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