

# GIVING LIVES BACK

FALL 2019

**West Park** **get**  
FOUNDATION **your**  
**life**  
**back**



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**Joanne Cole**  
Chief Executive Officer  
West Park Foundation

# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

To me, fall has always signaled the start of a new year. The long, slow days of summer end, kids return to school and the rest of us ramp up for a busy season. It seems a fresh start, almost more so than a new calendar year.

If you have visited the West Park campus recently, you will know that our own “fresh start” is well underway. Construction equipment dots the landscape and change seems to occur almost daily. And the anticipation is growing among staff, patients and volunteers alike as we get closer to the “big dig” and seeing our new hospital take shape. The new facility will capture the spirit of West Park: the courage of our patients who work hard to get their lives back, the commitment of our staff who work in partnership with

them, and the generosity of you – our donors – who are supporting their efforts now and in the future.

In this issue you can read about many of the outstanding people whose spirit and determination help make West Park a place of miracles that give lives back, including patient Joycey Romeo who is an active mother to her toddler son again after losing a leg to cancer, and Susanna Jouvstra, who is breathing easier with help from our Respiratory Rehabilitation Service.

We also highlight some of the outstanding accomplishments of our talented physicians and staff who have recently received the recognition they deserve. Well done all!

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Giving Lives Back*. You can keep up to date on all our news by following us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

## WEST PARK HISTORY UNCOVERED

Many changes are afoot at West Park during the early construction phase of the new hospital build. Construction crews are working away on campus, and anticipation continues to grow as we approach the “big dig.”

In recent months, EllisDon construction crews have made some intriguing discoveries while reconfiguring the hospital grounds.



During construction in the staff parking lot in the spring, workers uncovered a tunnel nearby the Gage Building. Archival records show that the forgotten tunnel once connected the hospital’s old Administration Building to the King Edward Sanatorium for Consumptives, which along with the tunnel were all built in 1907.

In August, workers unearthed 12 glass bottles and a mug while digging up the former Recreation Therapy Patio. The hospital’s main entrance, driveway and drop-off zone is being relocated to this area in preparation for the new hospital build, which will block the current main entrance.

As for the bottles and mug, the mystery of their origin has yet to be solved. Curious readers can visit [westpark.org/campusdevelopment](http://westpark.org/campusdevelopment) for more information on the bottles’ distinctive markings, colours and shapes.

Be sure to check out West Park’s Construction Cam to catch all the excitement, from now until 2023, as we build our new hospital.

# WALKING AND DANCING AGAIN AFTER LOSING A LEG TO CANCER

*When Joycey Romeo was diagnosed with synovial sarcoma, a rare cancer that affects soft tissue, her doctors told her she would need to have her entire right leg amputated, right up to her hip because the cancer was climbing up her pelvis.*

The mother of six arrived at West Park a week after her January surgery feeling scared and alone. But once she was in her room in the In-Patient Amputee Rehabilitation unit, she was immediately greeted by a nurse who took great care to make her feel safe and welcome.

“Everybody went above and beyond to make sure that I was doing well,” Joycey says. “You feel embarrassed because you have no dignity in the beginning, but these nurses were my light, my family. They gave me strength.”

Joycey told her occupational therapist her goals – to cook for her family and chase her two-year-old son – and she learned how to get around with one leg. Her nurses, who she calls her “angels,” introduced her to other patients at different stages of recovery; they told her inspiring stories that Joycey believes helped build her resilience.

“It is great to have the amputee unit because we are all in the same boat with the same struggles,” she says. “It is nice knowing you are not alone.”

This past June, Joycey got the call that her prosthetic leg was ready. She returned to West Park for another two weeks of rehabilitation and learned how to walk with her new leg.

“I was actually excited because I knew where I was going,” she says. “It’s going to take time but everyone has been so impressed. I was dancing at a wedding last week: on one leg first, and then I put my prosthetic on after dinner and danced all night long.”

Many people have stood out to Joycey during her time at West Park, too many to name.

“There are so many people that you don’t get a chance



to thank,” she says. “How do you thank the people who made your leg and made it possible for you to walk? How do you thank the nurses who washed your back when you couldn’t reach it?”

Each day, she’s getting stronger and more independent, she says, and doing something she didn’t think she would be able to do.

“I’m back in the kitchen making homemade pizza and lasagna for my kids,” Joycey says. “I’ve been a hair dresser for 25 years, and I am back to working with clients part time.

“I am walking slowly, but I am walking.”

# WEST PARK STAFF LEAD THE WAY



*Dr. Dina Brooks, NSA Chair in Respiratory Rehabilitation Research, was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Ottawa in recognition of her leadership in cardiorespiratory rehabilitation.*

*photo credit: Jacques Frémont*

*Congratulations to West Park's staff who were recently recognized for their contributions to the healthcare field.*

- **Dr. Nora Cullen** was the recipient of University of Toronto's Department of Medicine Award for Humanism in Medicine for her work helping patients with significant disabilities in Nepal.
- **Dr. Crystal MacKay** was awarded the Alun Morgan Memorial Research Grant for her project, "Individuals with Limb Loss and Health Care Providers."
- **Angela LoPonte** was the recipient of the 2019 Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario's Recognition Award for Leadership in Nursing Education (Staff Development).
- University of Toronto's Department of Physical Therapy recognized **Janet Campbell, David Buchnea, Dr. Crystal MacKay, Harold Moniz and Liz Udler** with Exceptional Achievement and Recognition Awards.
- **Amie Enns** was the recipient of the Fieldwork Educator Recognition Award from the University of Toronto's Occupational Therapy Department.

## West Park's Parapan Am Medalists

Congratulations to West Park patients **Jamoi Anderson** (12) and **Jesse Buckingham** (20) and the entire Men's Sitting Volleyball Team for their Parapan Am Bronze Medal this summer in Lima, Peru!





## WEST PARK SHINES IN SINGAPORE

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West Park's success as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) was highlighted at the International Council of Nurses Congress in Singapore this past summer.

A BPSO since 2006, West Park was the first rehabilitation and complex continuing care hospital in Ontario to achieve the prestigious designation with the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO).

Wynne de Jong, Director of Interprofessional Practice & Clinical Education at West Park, attended the congress as part of an international delegation of RNAO BPSO. During the congress, she gave a presentation on West Park's pioneering work in shifting the culture towards evidence-based practice through the use of best practice guidelines and transforming the practice of nursing through knowledge to achieve the best possible patient and organizational outcomes.

"It was a very proud moment for West Park to be highlighted," de Jong says. "We had a chance to shine and share."

When it comes to best practices, everybody has a role to play, de Jong says. "Our interprofessional team includes nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, respiratory therapists, speech language pathologists and more – all of whom work collaboratively to support our patients and meet their changing needs. That's pretty unique."

"West Park has a great deal to be proud of with the hard work and spirit of inquiry that have brought us to this point," de Jong says. "The focus now is on building on our good work as we prepare for the new hospital."

# WHY I GIVE: SUSANNA JOUWSTRA

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*“I got here on a Monday, and by Tuesday, I’d made up my mind that I was going to donate,” Susanna Jouvstra says when asked about her rehabilitation experience at West Park. “I never even knew about this place until a couple of months ago.”*

At 74, Susanna has had a very busy life. She worked as the secretary treasurer for the Cattlemen’s Association, and was married to a farmer. Her husband passed away from cancer 12 years ago, and then Susanna got her own diagnosis: lung and liver cancer. She has since had surgery on her liver and left lung, and radiation and chemo on her right lung. But then her doctors discovered cancer in her pancreas.

Susanna was being treated at Sunnybrook Hospital when she was referred to West Park’s Respiratory Rehabilitation Service. She needed to increase her breathing capacity before she could have surgery on her pancreas. Her respiratory rehab included breathing classes, walking with weights, and circuit training on a treadmill and bike.



“My breathing: it was amazing how it had changed, and how I felt afterwards,” Susanna says. “At home I didn’t do very much because I couldn’t breathe, and so I didn’t do anything. And here, they make you get up and do things. It is fabulous.” Her rehab experience has been made even better by the exceptional care and attention she has received from West Park staff.

“I can’t say enough about the staff: they make you feel like they care about you. They make you feel like you’re really something,” Susanna says. “They treat you as a human being; they don’t just treat you as ‘oh heck, here comes another one.’ That’s why I gave. That’s why I think this place has got to be recognized more.”

Susanna is excited to keep sharing her positive experience at home in Cobourg, Ont.

“We’ve got to let people know that you don’t have to die,” she says. “How wonderful that is to be given an extended life!”

## RUNNING FOR WEST PARK

Congrats to West Park’s Strides for Sustainability runners, who participated in the Longboat Toronto Island Run on September 8th and raised **\$3,161.00** in support of environmental sustainability in our new hospital.



# WEST PARK LOTTERY HAS A BRAND-NEW CASH PRIZE

## Win/win with our 50/50!

Tickets are on sale for the new West Park Lottery, featuring two great prizes, including a Jackpot Cash Prize in our 50/50 draw, with a guaranteed minimum of \$10,000!

Tickets are \$25 each or five for \$100 and include a chance to win a fabulous Early Bird Prize: a one-week stay at Deerhurst Resort in Muskoka, valued at \$1,995, to be drawn on Oct. 10, 2019. The winning ticket for the grand prize 50/50 cash jackpot will be announced on Nov. 7, 2019 at UNCORK UNTAP UNWIND.

“Two chances to win and supporting a great cause: we call that a win/win,” says Joanne Cole, CEO of West Park Foundation.

After five lotteries featuring a car, the Foundation has changed things up following feedback from our participant survey.



“You spoke, and we listened,” says Cole. “With better odds and a shorter sales period, a cash prize will add brand new excitement to our Lottery.”

Proceeds from the Lottery will be evenly split between the 50/50 Draw winner and West Park Foundation. The fall Lottery will be the first of two, with a second Jackpot Cash Prize to be drawn in March at Tournament of Stars.

Tickets can be purchased by calling **416.243.3663**, and the Lottery’s rules and regulation can be read at [westparklottery.ca](http://westparklottery.ca). Lottery licence #M810211

# JOIN US AT OUR ANNUAL TASTING EVENT!

Our popular tasting event is back for a fourth unforgettable year! Join us on Thursday, November 7, 2019 for great food, drink and entertainment at UNCORK UNTAP UNWIND.

By popular demand, we are returning to the spectacular Globe and Mail Centre, featuring stunning, panoramic views of the city and lake. Also by popular demand, The Collective is back and will have you dancing through the night with top 40 hits, soul and R&B.

Sip and savour, enjoy live entertainment and a fantastic auction – all in support of West Park Healthcare Centre.

Tickets are \$200 and sponsorship opportunities are available. Visit [westparkuncork.ca](http://westparkuncork.ca) or call **416.243.3663** for tickets and more information.



# WEST PARK FOUNDATION GOLF CLASSIC

The 2019 Golf Classic was an incredible success, with more than 100 golfers enjoying a beautiful day at the legendary St. George's Golf and Country Club on August 26.

Golfers were treated to a wonderful dinner and a silent auction, and heard from former musculoskeletal rehabilitation patient Tim Casarin about how West Park helped him get his life back and return to work as a firefighter after surviving an explosion.

Congratulations to the winning foursome, Mike Sherrard, Andrew Pariser, Mike LeClair and Anthony Ennis, with a score of 64.

The event raised over \$150,000 gross in support of West Park! Thank you to our event organizing committee members, Warren Law, David Kaiser and Jordan Assaraf for their hard work in making the day so successful.



From left: *Warren Law*, co-chair of the 2019 Golf Classic, *Robert Taylor*, *Devin Machin* and *Jonathan Law*

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Join us for our 4<sup>th</sup> annual celebrity basketball tournament in support of West Park.

March 27-28, 2020

For more information and to register.

[westparktournamentofstars.ca](http://westparktournamentofstars.ca)



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