

GIVING LIVES BACK

Winter 2024



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West Park
FOUNDATION

Get your life back.



"The future depends on what you do today."

—Gandhi

**By Doug Earle,
CEO, West Park Foundation**

In June 2009, West Park submitted its "Business Case for Campus Redevelopment" to the Health Capital Investment Branch of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Two years later, the Ontario government gave its approval to begin the project.

At the time, Anne-Marie Malek, West Park President & CEO, predicted that "the redevelopment would enable an integrated campus of care that models the way of the future for healthcare delivery, education and research."

Critically, it was this vision to build for the future—anticipating demographic trends and increased stress on the health system—that has resulted in a remarkable milestone reached last fall.

On November 21, 2023, Anne-Marie was presented by EllisDon, our builder, with the keys to the new West Park hospital. This ceremony marks the completion of the 730,000 sq. ft., world-class facility which has already been globally recognized for its innovative architectural design. And most importantly, it marks the beginning of the commissioning process to welcome patients this spring.

It is all part of a \$1.2 billion project, including the creation of outdoor therapeutic spaces, making it one of the largest and most impactful healthcare infrastructure projects in Ontario in a generation.

Meeting the challenges of tomorrow

Today's West Park is home to the largest inpatient amputee rehabilitation program and the largest centre for pulmonary rehabilitation in Canada, and true to our roots, we operate Ontario's only inpatient tuberculosis care unit. Our new campus will build on this foundation of excellence to meet the growing health needs of Ontarians.

As presciently anticipated by West Park back in 2009, today we are facing a demographic crisis with multiple and simultaneous factors colliding to exacerbate a system already under severe strain.

We are living longer resulting in medical and health needs that are becoming more complex. For our growing senior population, this can be particularly challenging.

To address these challenges, West Park is increasing our beds to 314 and will double its outpatient capacity. It will include a new and innovative Geriatric Day Program that will provide rehabilitation opportunities for frail seniors who would otherwise wait in acute care settings. And a new 256 bed long-term care facility will be built at West Park in a few years.

However, more than building new structures, it is West Park's new model of care delivery that will transform how patient care is accessed and delivered.

It is a "bridge and buffer" strategy designed to help patients recover from an acute care experience, return home sooner and to prevent re-admissions by expanding our outpatient and therapeutic programs and services.

With the Greater Toronto Area projected to add one million people to its population by 2030, and with an aging population that is living longer with chronic conditions, the opening of the new West Park hospital is welcome news for all Ontarians.

It is also a wonderful example of the power of advance planning and how the future really does depend on what is done today.

On the Cover

Andrew Anderson of EllisDon hands the keys to the new hospital to West Park CEO Anne-Marie Malek. They were joined by, from left: Arin Arat, Infrastructure Ontario; Desa Duric, EllisDon; Shelley Ditty, West Park; Adel Nekhil, Infrastructure Ontario.



Touring the main lobby of the new building. From left: Shelley Ditty, VP of Campus Development and Support Services; Minister of Health Sylvia Jones; Michael Ford, Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, and MPP for York South-Weston; Anne-Marie Malek, President & CEO.

We Have the Keys!

In early December, we were delighted to welcome Sylvia Jones, Ontario Minister of Health and Michael Ford, Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism to West Park, to help us celebrate the substantial completion of our new building.

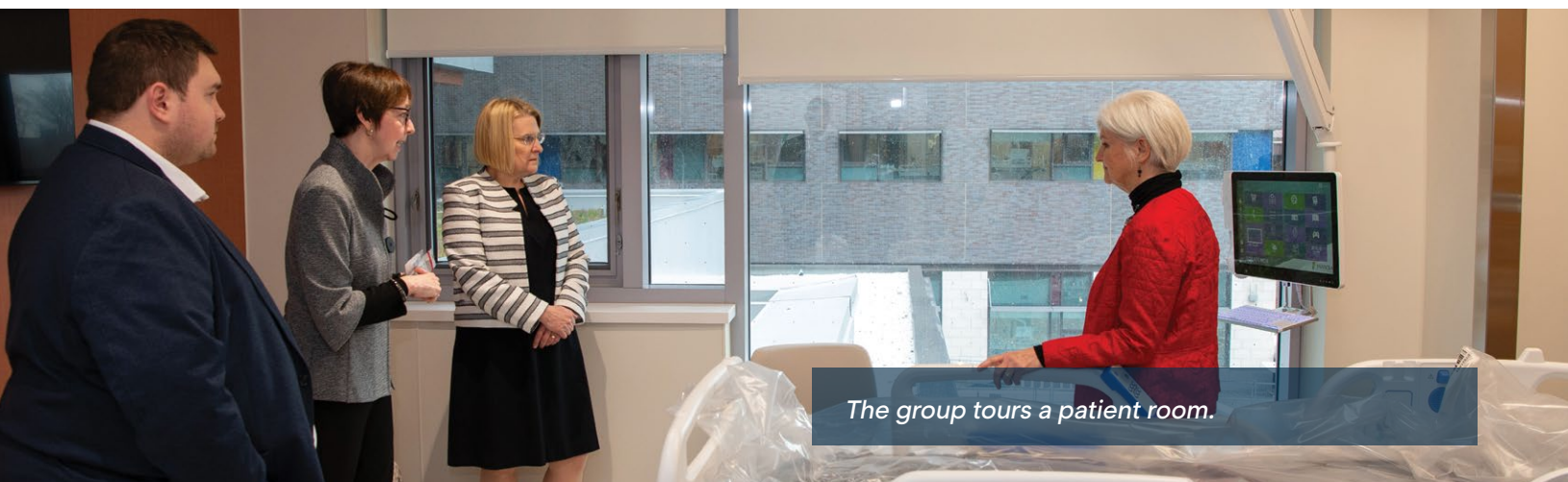
This construction milestone means the facility is operational and has been officially handed over from the contractor, EllisDon to West Park. Staff at the hospital can now begin training, orientation and move-in preparations for opening day in early spring.

The Ministers were given a tour of the building, learning about many of its key features and the impact it will have on our healthcare system.

"With demand for West Park's services expected to grow by over 50 per cent in the next 20 years, our new

facility will increase our capacity to better serve an aging population and Ontarians with complex health conditions," says Anne-Marie Malek, President & CEO.

West Park Foundation has transferred to date \$25.2 million of our \$80 million **Get Your Life Back capital campaign**, with another \$20 million targeted by 2025. "Our generous donor community has supported our new hospital every step of the way," says Doug Earle, CEO of West Park Foundation. "They are the very foundation of our new building."



The group tours a patient room.

"Be Part of the Change"

GENEROUS GIFT TO HELP WEST PARK GET READY FOR AGING POPULATION



Janet and Rick Lint

Rick Lint has been interested in healthcare for many years. A successful investment banker, he was recruited by the Ontario government to work on a health system study in the early 1990s. The study accurately forecasted today's aging population and over-stretched health system and recommended more investment in healthcare infrastructure. "For many years, it was just ignored," he says. "Now there's a lot of catch-up going on." Rick and his late wife Janet are helping West Park "catch up" by making a \$1.25 million gift to the **Get Your Life Back Campaign**.

Rick served on the board of Sick Kids before joining the West Park Healthcare Foundation board in 2009. He was immediately impressed by the work West Park does, calling it "nothing short of miraculous" in many cases. "If you can get a person from injured or sick to full functioning and independence, that's a gigantic step forward for the person and for society."

But Rick soon realized that the hospital was overdue for redevelopment.

"The entire facility was past its best-before date," he says. "And as the population ages, the wonderful services provided by West Park are going to be an increasing need." He calls the plans for the new hospital "astonishingly wonderful," providing more effective and efficient care to people whose lives have been changed by illness, accident, or disability. "Janet and I wanted to be part of the change."

Sadly, Janet passed away in July, after struggling for years with Pompe disease, a rare genetic condition

that causes respiratory issues. She and Rick were married for more than half a century, and he describes her simply as "a very special person."

Although Janet's main treatment centre was elsewhere, Rick is grateful to West Park, and especially to Dr. Roger Goldstein, for helping with sleep problems during her illness. He also appreciates the care his mother, who suffered from dementia, received as a resident of the long-term care home at West Park until her death at the age of 96. "She was treated very kindly and lovingly by the whole team," he says.

In honour of the Lints' generosity, their gift will be recognized through naming of the Respiratory Complex Continuing Care Service, the Respiratory Rehabilitation Services, and the Shared Therapy Inpatient Gym in the new hospital building.

"West Park is a wonderful team," says Rick. "They're taking on a big challenge and making great progress. The site is terrific, and the new facility will support outstanding care in all dimensions while also helping to serve the community in positive ways. The future is very bright for the West Park family."

Rick knows Janet will be pleased to see their gift to West Park come to fruition. "When she passed, a friend said, 'The angels will be making room for her in heaven.' She will be smiling down from there now."



In the Neighborhood

Paul and Barbara Collings

Paul Collings, who grew up close to West Park, has experience with hospitals around the world. Now he and his wife Barbara are making a commitment to West Park's future.

"Although unknown by so many for years, West Park provided such important care in a quiet way. As we step into the future with a brand-new hospital, my hope is that more people will be helped, and awareness will grow."

That's Paul Collings, a member of the West Park Foundation Board of Directors. He and his wife Barbara recently made a legacy gift commitment in support of the hospital's future.

Paul grew up in Mount Dennis, close by West Park. As a child, he remembers feeling the hospital was a mysterious place, 'the hospital up the hill.' His mother volunteered at West Park in the late '60s, visiting chronic care patients.

Paul and Barbara met at a university fraternity party and married some 50 years ago. They raised their two sons, Greg and Jonathan, and then Barb worked with the Toronto District School Board. Paul carved out a brilliant career with a company providing automated transport and pharmacy drug management systems to hospitals around the world. Along the way, they spent a year in Singapore while Paul took the reins of the Asian operation.

Today, Paul operates a part-time business services consulting practice focused on hospital logistics and international business development.

Paul and Barbara have always been involved in local community projects. Additionally, they were close friends of Blue Jays great Tony Fernandez for many years. Through him, they became involved in supporting youth baseball programs in Fernandez's home country of Dominican Republic while Paul served on the Tony Fernandez Foundation board. His sons were both ballplayers and his teenage grandson is currently playing at a competitive level, while a granddaughter plays competitive hockey.

Several years ago, Paul was introduced to West Park's CEO, Anne-Marie Malek, and became interested in what was happening at the hospital. "I didn't have to listen to her for long to realize her leadership style, knowledge and commitment attributes. She is clearly someone who has done a fantastic job, and her efforts are a big part of what has led to the new hospital."

When he was asked to join the Foundation board in 2014, Paul says it was an easy decision. "The role of West Park becomes more vital as the population ages and the need for specialized programs grows," he says. While West Park managed to achieve remarkable results in the old facility, he believes the new hospital will enable it to become a "truly world class facility."

Paul and Barbara have chosen to further contribute to West Park through their Wills. "It just seems a good way to manage our estate and influence where our assets will go and best express our values, after taking care of our family," says Paul. He hopes others will also consider a planned gift to support the hospital. "There are so many wonderful reasons to support West Park, and this makes it a little easier to do."



Dr. Fae Azhari attaches a sensor to a patient's prosthetic before monitoring his gait.

Sensor research aims to improve life for amputees

As both an engineer and an amputee, Dr. Fae Azhari is taking an important step towards research that could revolutionize the fit and comfort of lower limb prosthetics, improving the life of amputees.

Azhari's research at the University of Toronto primarily looks at structural health monitoring of structures such as bridges and buildings using sensors. But after a serious accident in 2018 caused the amputation of her right leg, she developed a passion for another engineering structure: prosthetics.

Following her accident, Azhari came to West Park to recover and be fitted for her prosthetic limb. While at West Park, she saw that clinicians were observing how amputees walk to identify any anomalies affecting their movement. That's when she began observing too—not as a patient, but as an engineer looking to solve a problem.

Similar to other rehabilitation hospitals, West Park has a gait mat, a large piece of equipment that takes up a lot of space and even more time. Clinicians seldom use it for these reasons and because there needs to be someone who knows how to interpret the results. There is newer wearable technology, but the cost can climb in to the thousands.

"There was a gap where we needed something quick and easy that could provide basic information about an amputee's gait," says Azhari, a cross-appointed professor between the Civil and Mineral Engineering and the Mechanical and Industrial Engineering Departments at U of T.

In 2020, Azhari began researching a more convenient and affordable way to use sensors in a clinical setting to monitor a patient's gait. Using relatively cheap sensors attached to a shoe cover, the information provides basic data that can help clinicians confirm what they have observed.

West Park's expertise in amputee rehabilitation made it the perfect setting for Azhari to conduct her research. She has been working with West Park scientist Dr. Crystal MacKay and several graduate students on this project, as well as West Park amputee patients who help test the sensors. The research is partially funded by The War Amps.

Wearable gait parameter tech already exists, but can run up to \$25,000, there's a lot of calibration involved and they're not size-adjustable between patients.

The prototype Azhari and her team are developing is less than \$200, it's adjustable and it goes over the shoe rather than an in-sole, which also negates hygiene issues.

Another component to this research was born out of issues Azhari was having with her socket; a very common problem for amputees. The socket is the device that joins the residual limb to the prosthesis. A common complaint among amputees is that there is a lot of pressure at certain points of the socket, which can cause discomfort and irritation.

Azhari and her team are working to develop another sensor that fits inside of the socket, which could potentially help a prosthetist understand whether a socket was too loose or too tight. They are planning to return to West Park next year, with a new prototype, to continue this exciting research.



Jen Schuringa has conquered the Camino!

West Park patient and traumatic brain injury survivor Jennifer Schuringa (centre, on the recumbent bike), and her 17-person team—dubbed "J's crew"—completed the Camino de Santiago on October 12, 2023. Thanks to treatments at West Park's renowned Spasticity Management Clinic, which helped relieve the tightness in her muscles and allowed her to train,

Jen was able to complete about one-third of the 28-day trek on her bike. Says Jen's mom Janette, "It was a team effort...it was community...and West Park is part of our community." Learn more about Jen's remarkable story in our Fall 2023 newsletter at WestParkFoundation.ca/spotlight/giving-lives-back-newsletter.



A Culinary Success!

Team Chef Lynn Crawford celebrates their Culinary Showdown victory.

The inaugural West Park Foundation Culinary Showdown on Saturday, October 21 was a great success, **raising over \$500,000** in support of West Park Healthcare Centre.

The evening saw five of Canada's hottest chefs battling it out alongside their teams of top fundraising foodies, cheered on by over 300 guests at the gala dinner.

The event is supporting our new Activities of Daily Living programs, which help people re-learn cooking and other life skills after a serious injury or illness.

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Get ready to Shoot Hoops with the Stars!

Metta World Peace faces off against a player from the Toronto Star team in 2023.

Basketball stars from across North America will be converging on Toronto on March 22 and 23 for the **5th Annual Tournament of Stars** in support of West Park.

The event, presented by Mortgage Company of Canada, gets underway on Friday, March 22 with a Celebrity Draft Party, where teams will draft their celebrity teammate. The more money a team raises, the higher their chance of drafting their favourite NBA or WNBA star.

The next day, the celebrity players—including Jerome 'JYD' Williams, José Calderón, Matt Bonner, Ivory Latta and Jamarion Moon—will hit the courts alongside their teams of West Park supporters for an action-packed day at UofT's Goldring Centre for High Performance Sport.

The tournament is a fun, family-friendly event, with a 3-Point Shootout Competition open to all attendees and a Kids' Skills Clinic.

Visit WestParkTournamentofStars.ca to learn more about how you can participate in the tournament and support West Park! Register a team, purchase game day tickets, or donate to a team or an individual player.



**West Park
FOUNDATION**
Get your life back.



**Accredited
IMAGINE CANADA**

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Statement: At West Park Healthcare Centre Foundation, we are committed to fostering an inclusive, diverse and accessible environment, an important part of living our brand. We are dedicated to building a staff and board that reflects the diversity of our community.

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