

2025 Report to Donors
The Impact of Your Support



We extend our heartfelt thanks to you for your generous support and unwavering commitment to our mission.

Thanks to donors like you, UHN's West Park is able to continue making a meaningful difference in the lives of our patients and families.

#### **Milestone after Milestone**

In 2024, West Park celebrated its 120th anniversary. We opened our new hospital building, the centre of a campus-wide redevelopment that is improving access to our in-demand rehabilitative and complex care programs and enabling us to transform how we deliver care.

At the same time, West Park completed a voluntary integration with UHN and today forms Canada's most comprehensive and specialized rehabilitation and complex continuing care hospital.

The Foundation's \$80 million Get Your Life Back capital campaign continues to contribute towards the government-required local share for a \$1.2 billion campus redevelopment.

### A Lot Done. More To Do.

Opening our new hospital building last spring — and adding 500 new staff — was a significant milestone in West Park's redevelopment. One example of the impact of our new facility is that we have doubled our outpatient capacity. But the work is not nearly done.

We are continuing with the renovation of our legacy building which, when complete in 2026, will add a further 188 beds to the health system.

Construction continues with our outdoor therapy spaces, including multi-surface paths and walking trails. We have completed construction of The Fuller Family Central Plaza and The Fox Memorial Garden.

RBC Foundation's generous donation of \$800,000 is supporting accessibility in these spaces, including a fully accessible ramp to the rooftop garden on our legacy building, making this healing space accessible to all.

# Expanding Our Expertise to Meet Demand

Over the next 20 years, Canada's 65+ population is expected to grow by 68%.

In response, and under the direction of visionary Geriatrician **Dr. Jamal Depradine**, West Park launched the highly innovative Geriatric Rapid Rehab Program to help older adults transition out of the ER, as well as a Geriatric Day Hospital to provide rehabilitation to seniors while they live at home.

More than two million Canadians are currently living with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), with nearly 50% of those cases undiagnosed — and therefore untreated

Expanding Access to Care

A **46% increase** in outpatient visits in our new hospital building.





45,737

— driving it to be the second leading cause of emergency and acute services. Working with Black Creek Community Health Centre and supported by a \$750,000 donation from TD Bank Group, we continue to seek new and innovative ways to collaborate and improve access to respiratory rehab, and therefore, reduce demand for acute care.

Joining **Dr. Roger Goldstein**, our internationally renowned expert in respiratory rehabilitation, will be **Dr. Dmitry Rozenberg**, who will take up the position of the National Sanitarium Association Chair in Respiratory Rehabilitation Research.



From left, patients Kelly Kadechuk and Deirdre Samuels.

Our designation as the Ontario Centre of Excellence for Long-Term Ventilation further underscores our leadership in this field as we continue to help people breathe better.

In partnership with CAMH, we recruited our Fellowship in Mental Health in Ambulatory Geriatrics and Respiratory Disease, designed to provide comprehensive education to young clinicians interested in specializing in the care of older adults with respiratory conditions who also experience mental health challenges.

#### Looking to the Future

We are recruiting a Limb Preservation Scientist to join the largest amputee rehab program in Canada and a Spasticity Scientist who will spearhead our efforts to improve treatments for this debilitating symptom of stroke, spinal cord injury, MS and Cerebral Palsy.

By leveraging our Augmentative and Alternative Communication clinic to create a Human Factors Lab, we will help give voice to those who are unable to communicate using the spoken word.

### Building a Legacy. Leaving a Legacy.

Since its foundation 120 years ago, West Park has grown and flourished thanks to your support and the dedication of our incredible staff and volunteers.

Your contributions play a vital role in helping us provide exceptional care, advance medical research and education, and improve the overall health and well-being of our community.

We are deeply inspired by your generosity.

By people like the **Kress Family**, who was motivated by our integration with UHN to invest in West Park with a **\$1 million** gift which is being recognized through the naming of our diagnostic and imaging centre.

We thank the more than 80 people who have indicated an interest in leaving a gift in their Will as their legacy. In your own words: "you want as many people as possible to experience the kind of care you received at West Park."

Thanks to you, we truly have a Foundation for the Future.



Janet Griffin Chair, Board of Directors



Doug Earle Chief Executive Officer

### Kress Family Gift Celebrates "A Perfect Match"

Ed Kress grew up in the west end of Toronto, and attended Islington Public School, Etobicoke Collegiate, and the University of Toronto. Yet when he joined the board of the West Park Foundation in 2002, he had barely heard of the hospital.

"That was the big problem West Park had," he says. "Nobody knew what it was or where it was! For me, it was quite an education."

Much has changed in the intervening two decades. Now a beautiful new hospital building is attracting kudos, and West Park is celebrating the recent voluntary integration with University Health Network (UHN). Kress has made a \$1 million donation to West Park Foundation, part of a joint gift solicited with UHN Foundation, that will be recognized by naming West Park's diagnostics and imaging laboratory, The Kress Family Diagnostic Centre.

Kress studied commerce at U of T and then, influenced by two family members, became an accountant. His practice came to focus primarily on one large client, Brascan (later Brookfield Corporation), and in 1974 Kress joined the company.

"It was a great company, and a great place to work," he says. He rose to the top, eventually serving as Group Chairman at Brookfield Asset Management.

As his career peaked, Kress was encouraged to get involved in the community. A U of T classmate approached him about a gift to West Park. When he replied that Brookfield preferred to support organizations where their employees were involved, he was invited to join the West Park Foundation Board of Directors. He served on the board from 2002 to 2011, including one year as Vice Chair, two years as Chair, and also spent two years on the Centre Board.



Even in the early 2000s, there was growing recognition that West Park needed a new building. To raise awareness of the hospital and support the future fundraising effort, the board inaugurated a gala, the Scarlett Ball. Kress's wife Paddy, an experienced event planner, led the first event, which was a huge success. She also served as the inaugural Chair of the Foundation's Donor Recognition Committee.

#### "West Park's new building and its location are spectacular, and now it's connected to Canada's leading hospital network. It's a perfect match."

When Paddy became ill, Kress stepped back from his work at West Park. He remembers a time when Paddy was diagnosed with Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome and treated in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Toronto Western Hospital. Worried, Kress called Dr. Roger Goldstein at West Park. Goldstein told him that the head of the unit was an exceptional clinician who had transformed the way ICUs operate. Says Kress, "That gave me some comfort at a difficult time, and we got through it." Paddy passed away in 2019.

In 2023, West Park CEO Anne-Marie Malek called Kress at the cottage to let him know that West Park was in the process of merging with UHN.

"I was absolutely overjoyed," he says. "West Park's new building and its location are spectacular, and now it's connected to Canada's leading hospital network. It's a perfect match."

Wyman-Steinsky Concourse

## **Celebrating Your** Generosity



West Park's new hospital building, the centre of an ongoing, campus-wide redevelopment, is enabling transformative change in the delivery of our rehabilitative and complex care programs, for the benefit of our patients and the health system overall. Our donors helped make it happen.

"Opening our leading-edge facility in April 2024 was a historic milestone for UHN's West Park, one that was only made possible through the collective generosity of our donor community," says Doug Earle, CEO of West Park Foundation.

Over the past year, we've begun celebrating with donors and their guests as we unveil the areas in the hospital that recognize their generosity and commitment to our patients:

Don Buchanan paid tribute to his late, long-time partner, Mary-Jean Deeth, by naming a resting alcove in her honour. This inviting space on the third floor is a cozy place for patients and visitors to gather, or rest as they walk through the hospital.

John Franklin is a former Foundation board member and was part of the hospital's Campus Development Committee when our new building was being planned. John and his wife Susan's generous gift is being recognized through the Franklin Family Activities of Daily Living Kitchen.

The Kiwanis Club of Kingsway Humber showed their community spirit and commitment to West Park through two generous donations, which are being recognized with the Kiwanis Club of Kingsway Humber Piano Lounge and the Kiwanis Club of Kingsway Humber Children's Play Area.

The Wyman-Steinsky Concourse and the Michael, Anna and John Wyman Reflection Area recognize the long volunteer service of former Foundation board chair Georgina Steinsky, and pay tribute to Georgina's son and two grandchildren who died tragically in January 2021. Many generous members of the West Park community helped to make these special recognitions possible.

Ida Minaudo unveiled a resting alcove named for her parents, Rachele and Vincenzo Minaudo, in recognition of the tremendous care Rachele received at West Park as a respiratory patient.

Former Foundation board member David Kaiser and his wife Christy's generous contribution to support our new hospital is being recognized through the naming of a resting alcove on the fifth floor.

"We are grateful for every single gift, and to have had the opportunity to thank these generous donors in person," says Earle. "We are looking forward to many more of these special occasions."



Ida Minaudo with Foundation CEO Doug Earle.



# Introducing the new NSA Chair

Dr. Dmitry Rozenberg brings experience, ideas, and passion to his role

When Dr. Dmitry Rozenberg talks about his recent appointment as the National Sanitarium Association (NSA) Chair in Respiratory Rehabilitation Research, he exudes excitement and energy. "This is an amazing opportunity at this stage in my career," he says. "It's also an opportunity to give back to patients and help them with their daily function."

Dr. Rozenberg was born in Belarus, moving to Canada with his parents when he was six. He grew up in Thornhill and attended York University to study kinesiology. Then it was off to Ottawa for medical school, where he worked with cardiologists on cardiac stress testing and fitness-to-drive research. As a resident in internal medicine in Toronto, he continued to seek out opportunities for research.

During his respirology residency, he spent three months at UHN's West Park, where he worked with Dr. Roger Goldstein, inaugural holder of the NSA Chair. "That's where my career really started," Dr. Rozenberg says. "Dr. Goldstein's years of experience and mentorship helped me get excited about pulmonary rehabilitation research." He also appreciated the multi-modal approach and team dynamic at West Park. He decided to focus his research on pulmonary rehabilitation and was accepted into a fouryear Eliot Phillipson clinician-scientist program at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Rozenberg's research focuses on patients with advanced lung disease, including those preparing for and recovering from lung transplantation.

"Transplantation offers a survival benefit, but it also offers a marvelous quality of life and functional benefit," he says. "Being able to see patients develop their fitness level pretransplant and then go through the transplant journey and realize the quality-of-life benefit is very rewarding." He is currently leading a major study looking at the impact of inspiratory muscle training on patients before lung transplantation across all four transplant centers in Canada.

He completed his PhD in 2017, joined the faculty of the University of Toronto in 2018, and was recently made an Associate Professor (July 2025). In 2018, he was awarded the Sandra Faire and Ivan Fecan Professorship in Rehabilitation Medicine, a position he held until December 2024.

The NSA Chair was created in 2002 with a \$1 million donation from the NSA matched by West Park Foundation through the generosity of donors.

During his tenure, Dr. Rozenberg looks forward to advancing research on chronic lung disease, especially COPD, the third leading cause of morbidity and mortality globally. He sees many potential research avenues, from the development of effective tele-rehabilitation programs and personalized medicine approaches to the impact of COPD on cognition.

He believes that West Park is an ideal centre for clinical trials and hopes to attract a number of trainees. "This is an awesome opportunity to build the next generation of scientists," he says. He's also excited about the potential to collaborate across the UHN hospital sites and beyond.

Dr. Rozenberg says, "hard work and good fortune" have helped advance his career. Then he adds, "But the most important element is being able to ask the right patient centered clinical questions. When you speak to patients day to day, you realize where the gaps are, and can ask the right questions."

# Grateful for Exceptional Care

Daniel and his mom Khazeena in the Canadian Rockies.

Daniel, sister Yasneen and dad Sam.

Daniel Ashroff has been in and out of hospitals since he was a newborn. So when his father Sam says that UHN's West Park is a special place filled with dedicated professionals, it really means something.

Daniel and his family have faced far more than their share of health challenges. He was born with a cleft palate, collapsed lung, and Pierre Robin syndrome, and was rushed to Sick Kids within hours of his birth. At age five he was diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome and, as a teenager, he was diagnosed with leukemia. He has also undergone several surgeries, including a jaw reconstruction to correct the effects of the Pierre Robin syndrome, two hip replacements and hernia surgery. Then in January 2025, he underwent surgery to remove a benign tumor in his brain.

But Daniel has also lived a rich and meaningful life. An Air Cadet in high school, he co-piloted a Cessna with his parents along for the ride. He went on to complete a diploma at Humber College and has worked at Value Village for the past 16 years. He is an accomplished pianist and self-taught computer programmer, currently developing a computer game. A great lover of books, he regularly walks 40 minutes to his local library to browse. He is especially fond of Shakespeare, and rejoices in regular trips to the Stratford Festival.

"What is truly remarkable is not just that Daniel survived, but that he has thrived," says his proud father. "He didn't let the adversities define him; instead, he defined his own path." After the brain surgery, Daniel's memory and balance were affected, and he couldn't play the piano. He spent eight days in acute care following his brain surgery before being transferred to West Park.

From the beginning, the family was impressed by the quality of care he received. A doctor and physiotherapist came to speak to them as soon as Daniel was settled in his room. A patient coordinator arranged for a recliner so that Sam or his wife could stay with their son. Nurses and therapists provided professional care with "kindness, skill and dedication." Even the food was appetizing!

Daniel is now at home and doing well. His memory is back and balance improved, and he has returned to work and the piano. The Ashroff family is grateful to the healthcare professionals who helped make that possible.

Recently Sam wrote a letter of appreciation to West Park, and made a donation to say thank you.

"I am certain that our experience is not unique and that many families have benefited from the exceptional care provided at West Park," he wrote. "This speaks volumes about the strong leadership and commitment to excellence that define your institution. It is a true testament to the quality of health care in Canada, and for that we are sincerely grateful."

# Enabling Independence:

UHN's West Park takes accessibility a step further, ensuring that people of all abilities can participate equally

Patient James Reynolds investigating the Integrated Bedside Terminal in his room.

When we think about accessibility, many of us envision ramps and wide doorways to accommodate wheelchairs. But the concept as realized at West Park's new hospital building is much broader. "Our philosophy of accessibility goes beyond the physical," says Shelley Ditty, Vice President, Campus Development and Support Services. "Our patient population, which has a diverse range of abilities, requires and demands a different approach."

The new building's accessibility features are informed by the concept of universal design the idea that environments can be designed to be usable by all people, regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability. While experts, both West Park's own occupational therapists and external consultants, provided insight during the planning stage, patients and families played a key role. For example, mock-ups of patient rooms and elevators were built, and patients were invited to explore their use. One result was that buttons were mounted on the sides of the elevators, in addition to the front, making it easier for patients in wheelchairs to operate them independently. Hallway size and turning radius were adjusted because West Park patients often use large wheelchairs.

The building is dotted with charging stations for motorized wheelchairs, oxygen refill stations, and water bottle refill stations. "It's a big building," says Ditty. "Patients can move around without worrying about running out of what they need." Seating alcoves are placed along the hallways, providing a place to rest and chat. Hearing loops, which deliver clear sound directly to hearing aids, are installed in the auditorium and reception areas. Wayfinding is simple and clear, with accessible signage and wheelchair-level wayfinding kiosks. Integrated Bedside Terminals (IBTs) with assistive technologies are available in every patient room. Using their IBTs, patients can control lighting, blinds and temperature, access the Internet, make telephone calls, and more.

Other accessibility features include:

- A therapy pool with audio and video capabilities, a ramp, and a ceiling lift;
- Dining room tables with height-adjustable leaves to accommodate patients in wheelchairs at different heights;
- Hands-free power door operators with elongated activation plates.

Outdoors, sidewalks are wide enough for people in large wheelchairs to pass each other. Universally accessible pathways make movement through natural areas easy and safe, and seating alcoves and raised planting beds encourage participation in outdoor activities. A ramp is under construction, linking an accessible courtyard at the new building to the second-floor rooftop garden on the legacy building, a project made possible through a generous donation from RBC Foundation.

Ditty says people who have toured the new building are "amazed at the level of detail and the variety of features we've incorporated." Ultimately, she adds, accessibility is about improving the experience of patients and families, a key goal for the new building project. "We're here to enable patient interactions and to facilitate their independence," she says. "Did we get it all right? Well, we certainly tried!"



Rachel Armstrong playing Mario Kart during Recreation Therapy's weekly adaptive gaming session.

Videogaming is enormously popular, and not just with youth. In fact, a 2022 survey found that 53% of Canadians play videogames.

It comes as no surprise then that for inpatients at UHN's West Park, videogaming is a popular pastime.

But what about patients who have limited — or no — use of their arms or hands?

That's where the innovative Adaptive Gaming Program comes in. Using customized adaptive set-ups, many of which were created in our Biomedical Engineering Service, the program enables patients of all abilities to play.

The program was developed through a collaboration between West Park's Occupational Therapy and Recreation Therapy services, to improve patients' quality of life, allow them to participate in a widely popular activity and help reduce social isolation. Recreation Therapy continues to run the program, which is generously supported by Scotiabank.

"The gaming program enhances patients' selfconfidence in an environment that encourages positive social interactions," says recreation therapist Zianna Manji.

Most video games, designed for able-bodied individuals, require a minimum of three buttons to play, so for patients who don't have use of their hands, an adaptive solution must be found.

When a patient expresses an interest in video gaming, a therapist works with them to determine what equipment they're able to use and what their abilities allow them to do.

Rachel Armstrong, an inpatient since 2019, has very limited mobility in her hands, so the team set her up with the "smallest controls they had," Rachel says. "The other ones are too big, or they move away from my hands, so we had to find something that would stay put."

With the small controllers under her hands, and a button on the headrest of her wheelchair, which she taps with her head to use, she's ready to play.

And she plays well, coming in the top three in repeated games of Mario Kart. "It gets my heart going," she says of playing.

Karl Paitz, a patient with ALS, was reluctant to join the program at first. It was another patient, Nic Leocadio, who Karl says "dragged me down" to attend the gaming sessions, watching at first, and then joining the program. Now, Karl is a devoted attendee of the program where he and Nic — who plays by using his tongue battle against each other in FIFA 2023.

Rachel says that the program helped her to get to know her fellow patients and feel comfortable exploring other programs. "I'm sort of an introvert," she says. "When I first came to West Park, I thought 'I don't know if I want to do all these activities.' But then they asked about video games I said, 'okay I'll do that.' And then I just started joining in other programs. Now I'm coming together with people who enjoy the same things I do."

Karl sums up the patients' feelings about the adaptive gaming program. "I know I can speak for everyone, that everybody is very, very grateful for the program."

# **Our Donors**

#### THE GET YOUR LIFE BACK CAMPAIGN

We are honoured to celebrate the following individuals and organizations who are supporting the redevelopment of the hospital through the **Get Your Life Back Campaign.** 



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