

Medical Treatment • Research • Rehabilitation

Shepherd

Center Spinal Column®



Home Away From Home

Housing, caregiver training, and transition support help families support loved ones

Also Inside

Celebrating the New Arthur M. Blank Family Residences | Kristine Ozug's Journey with Multiple Sclerosis | Spotlight on the Center for Assistive Technologies

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About the Cover
Shawna and Todd Starks chat with their daughter, Kiley Gardner, in their apartment at the Blank Family Residences. Photo by Bitá Honarvar

Letter from Jamie Shepherd



Dear Readers,

After my father, James Shepherd, sustained a spinal cord injury (SCI) in 1973, my grandparents Alana and Harold traveled with him to Denver while he completed four months of intensive rehabilitation. There, they experienced firsthand how vital family support is during the rehabilitation process.

That's why at Shepherd Center, family plays a key role in everything we do. From day one, we welcome and encourage families to take part in their loved ones' rehabilitation process. We want everyone who comes through our doors to feel like family, whether that's through a smile in the hallway, some comfort food in the cafeteria, or staying in our family housing.

Like my father did following his SCI, many of our patients cross state lines to seek care for the complex conditions we treat. More than half of our patients come from outside of Georgia, with an average inpatient stay of 50 days. Family housing helps alleviate the emotional and financial burdens people face during rehabilitation. It also helps families learn the nuances of medications, equipment, insurance policies, home modifications, and ongoing medical care that will help their loved one return home with confidence.

In this issue of *Spinal Column*, we celebrate the opening of the new Arthur M. Blank Family Residences, which has more than doubled our housing capacity. On page 8, you'll find accounts from families and patients who've stayed in our housing and how it helped them throughout rehabilitation and the transition home. On page 7, you'll meet Linda Bristol, Shepherd Center's housing director, and learn about her role in working with patients and families staying in housing. And on page 20, you can explore the Blank Family Residences and its unique features designed with patients and families in mind.

We want our patients and families to return home with the highest level of confidence and independence. But in the meantime, while they're completing rehabilitation, engaging with our variety of support programs, and exploring the Atlanta area through our patient outings, it's our goal to make Shepherd Center their home away from home.

Warm regards,

Jamie Shepherd

Jamie Shepherd, MBA, MHA, FACHE
President and Chief Executive Officer of Shepherd Center

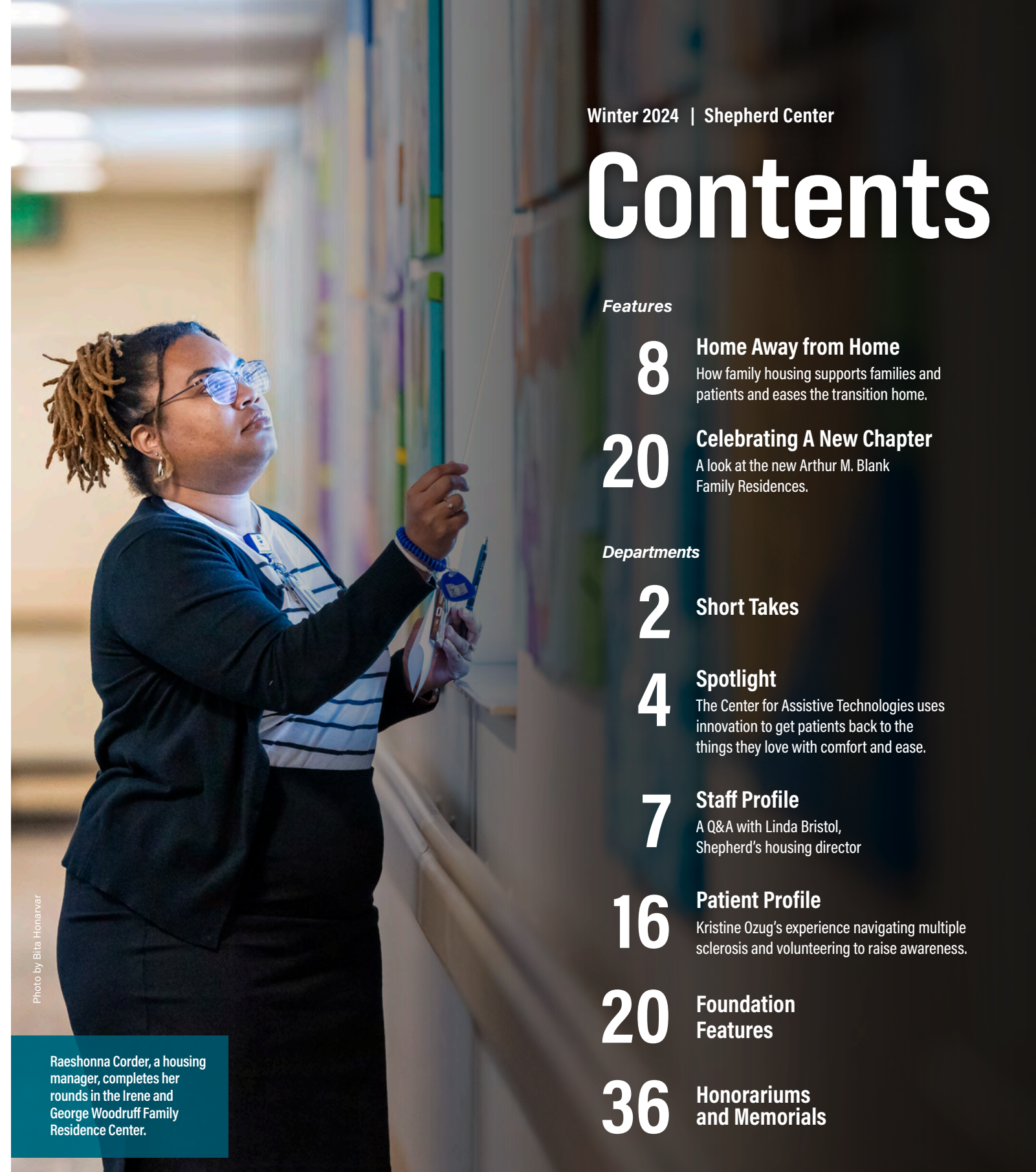


Photo by Bitá Honarvar

Raeshonna Corder, a housing manager, completes her rounds in the Irene and George Woodruff Family Residence Center.

Winter 2024 | Shepherd Center

Contents

Features

8 **Home Away from Home**
How family housing supports families and patients and eases the transition home.

20 **Celebrating A New Chapter**
A look at the new Arthur M. Blank Family Residences.

Departments

2 **Short Takes**

4 **Spotlight**
The Center for Assistive Technologies uses innovation to get patients back to the things they love with comfort and ease.

7 **Staff Profile**
A Q&A with Linda Bristol, Shepherd's housing director

16 **Patient Profile**
Kristine Ozug's experience navigating multiple sclerosis and volunteering to raise awareness.

20 **Foundation Features**

36 **Honorariums and Memorials**

 See news.shepherd.org for additional online content.

Gifts of Generosity

If you would like to make a gift to support the work you have read about, please contact Sarah L. Batts at the Shepherd Center Foundation at 404-350-7305 or scan the QR code.



Remembering Bernie Marcus

An Atlanta icon and longtime friend of Shepherd Center

By Jon Roxland

A giant in the worlds of both business and philanthropy, Bernard (Bernie) Marcus passed away on Nov. 4 at the age of 95. Bernie's commitment to leaving the world a better place than he found it had a transformational impact on Shepherd Center, the Atlanta community, and beyond, and he will be greatly missed by so many around the world.

Bernie Marcus was a self-made success story, working his way from humble beginnings to an executive role at Handy Dan Improvement Centers, where he met his future business partner and lifelong friend, Arthur Blank. Being fired by Handy Dan in 1978, Bernie often said, was both the lowest point in his life and the moment of his greatest opportunity. For years, he had envisioned a store where you could put all home improvement supplies under one roof, cut out the middleman, and pass the savings on to the customers. In 1979, Bernie co-founded The Home Depot, now the world's largest home improvement retailer, along with Arthur Blank and Ken Langone, and served as The Home Depot's first CEO and chairman until his retirement in 2002.

The core values of The Home Depot — taking care of its people, giving back to its communities, and doing the right thing — became the fundamental principles of The Marcus Foundation, which Bernie and his beloved wife Billi established in 1989 to be the central conduit for their charitable giving. Since that time, The Marcus Foundation has granted more than \$2.7 billion to

causes close to their hearts, empowering hundreds of organizations to sustain and expand their life-changing work, with Shepherd Center being a treasured partner for almost 40 years.

In the mid-1980s, a neighbor of the Shepherd family encouraged Bernie to tour Shepherd Center with Alana Shepherd. He initially resisted, fearing that it would be a depressing environment, but he eventually visited Shepherd and left inspired by the positive attitude and enthusiasm that he felt permeating the building. Bernie made his first gift to Shepherd Center later that year, joined the hospital's Board of Directors in 1987, and has been an integral figure at Shepherd ever since. He co-chaired the hospital's Best is Yet to Come Capital Campaign, and his gift named the Billi Marcus building in honor of her birthday in 1992.

The Marcus Foundation later founded what is now known as



Shepherd's Transition Support Program, ensuring that patients receive the critical support they need to return to community life, work, and independence post-discharge. Bernie also stepped forward to help service members and veterans by establishing the SHARE Military Initiative at Shepherd Center, which leads the nation in providing care for veterans, active-duty service members, and first responders who have sustained traumatic brain injuries while serving our country.

Finally, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, both Bernie and Billi Marcus agreed to serve as honorary co-chairs of Pursuing Possible:

The Campaign for Shepherd Center, with The Marcus Foundation providing a lead grant of \$80 million that will help fund renovations to Shepherd's main campus as well as the creation of the new Marcus Center for Advanced Rehabilitation, a building scheduled to open in the spring of 2025, ensuring that Bernie Marcus's magnificent legacy at Shepherd Center will live on for generations to come.



(top) Bernie and Billi Marcus pose for a photo in the hallway at Shepherd Center. ▶ (left) Fred Alias, James Shepherd, Bernie Marcus, and architect Henry Howard Smith II pose for a photo at the groundbreaking of the Billi Marcus building.

Promotions in Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program

Congratulations to Shari McDowell, PT, DPT, FASIA, FACHE, and Jennifer Douglas, MS, CCC/SLP, on their recent promotions at Shepherd Center.

McDowell, a 31-year veteran of Shepherd Center who previously served as the program director for the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Rehabilitation Program, became chief operating officer (COO) in September, as Jamie Shepherd transitioned into the role of chief executive officer.

"I am honored to have the privilege to help advance care at Shepherd Center," McDowell says. "The needs of our patients and families will be front and center as we continue to drive toward excellence."

McDowell joined Shepherd Center as a physical therapist in the SCI Rehabilitation Program, and her influence in the SCI rehabilitation field extends beyond the hospital's walls. In 2024, she was selected as a Fellow of the American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA), an honor bestowed to individuals who exemplify distinguished accomplishments in spinal cord injury research, clinical practice, education, and advocacy, and for longstanding service to the society.

Douglas, previously the SCI Inpatient Therapy Program manager, is filling the SCI Rehabilitation Program Director role. As the new director, Douglas

combines her 26 years of clinical experience with leadership expertise to lead the program as it continues to provide care for patients with the most medically complex injuries and illnesses. She began her career at Shepherd as a speech therapist in 2001.

"The care and expertise our teams provide to our patients and their caregivers is compassionate, innovative, and thoughtful. I am already inspired by them daily and am beyond honored to have the privilege to help support and lead the future of the Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation Program at Shepherd Center," Douglas says.



Shepherd Center Begins Adaptive Hunting Partnership with Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Shepherd Center has a new partnership to get people outdoors after illness or injury. Shepherd Center formalized an adaptive hunting partnership with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in August. Through the partnership, Shepherd's recreation therapists will train DNR staff on leading adaptive hunting and fishing trips for people with permanent or temporary disabilities. Additionally, the DNR will hold two adaptive hunting slots for Shepherd to fill with current and former patients as part of its Outdoors Beyond Barriers program.

"We are excited about this partnership with Shepherd Center because it will better prepare and equip our agency staff with the needed skills to effectively assist all Outdoors Beyond Barriers participants. In addition to that, the partnership will allow current Shepherd Center patients direct access to DNR staff to assist them in getting outside," says Walter Rabon, Commissioner of Georgia DNR.

Gavin McClintock, an outdoor specialist in Shepherd Center's Recreation Therapy Program, has been leading adaptive hunting trips for patients for seven years. As part of the new partnership, he led a workshop for DNR staff.

"After being able to train a lot of the DNR members, I'm excited by their passion for the outdoors and the fact that they are so committed to assisting people with varying abilities to get back out and hunt," McClintock says. "A big plus for this partnership is being able to reach more people together. Having access to DNR's property, and Shepherd's resources and knowledge for working with people with disabilities, it's a great opportunity for both sides."



A Gateway to Independence

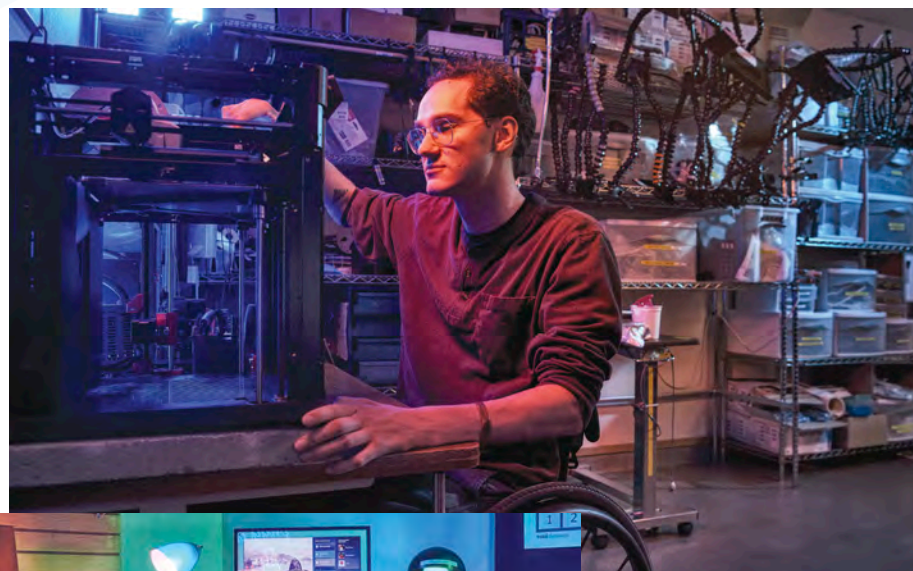
The Dora and Ed Voyles Center for Assistive Technologies gives people the tools to live life to the fullest after injury or illness.

By Damjana Alverson

Shepherd Center's Center for Assistive Technologies works with patients to find innovative solutions to challenges, focusing on the individual's injury or condition, daily activities, and personal preferences.

"Our biggest goal is to remove barriers in the way of people living the life they want," says assistive technology rehabilitation engineer, Jared Grier. "Being able to give people that ability, especially when they feel like they no longer can do something, is the most rewarding part of my job."

Offering close collaboration between therapists, assistive technology professionals, research teams, and engineers like Grier, the Center for Assistive Technologies includes the Access Technology Lab, Driving Evaluation and Rehabilitation Program, and Wheelchair Seating and Mobility Clinic.



(From top) Jared Grier monitors the progress of an active 3D printing job that will be used to build adaptive equipment for patients. ▶ Graylyn Jones helps a patient use alternative computer access methods.



Access Technology Lab

The Access Technology Lab offers specialized expertise, personalized assistive devices, and technology solutions for living, working, and playing. It fosters independence in everything from switching on a light to calling for help to accessing a mobile device.

"We do comprehensive evaluations to determine a patient's function and goals, then provide treatment. We educate patients on potential solutions and trial them to see what works best," says Graylyn Jones, OTR/L, an occupational therapist in the Access Technology Lab. "Nothing is one size fits all. We could have 35 patients with the same injury, and we'll probably have 35 combinations of assistive tech for each of them."



Photos by ELEY

Jones says assistive technology helps her patients in many ways, including returning to work, communicating with loved ones, and enjoying their favorite pastimes.

"We ask folks what they like to do, and they say, 'Oh, I played video games with my brothers, but I can't anymore because of my injury,'" Jones says. "Getting to see how happy and excited they are when they get to do something they didn't think was possible is so fulfilling."



Driving Evaluation and Rehabilitation Program

Shepherd Center's Driving Evaluation and Rehabilitation Program helps people with disabilities regain or gain for the first time the independence that comes with driving.

"Driving means so much to our patients," says occupational therapist and certified driver rehabilitation specialist Lakisha Gray, MSOT, OTR/L, CDRS. "It gives them a better quality of life when they know they can have reliable transportation to return to work and go to medical appointments. They can leave the house to see friends or enjoy an activity. They can take some burden of care off loved ones by picking up the kids or groceries. It gives a sense of purpose and normalcy."

Gray conducts a driving evaluation, including a clinical assessment of cognitive, vision, and motor abilities. An on-road assessment is also completed which includes discussing

best vehicle options, determining assistive driving equipment that is compatible with patient's function, and a drive using the equipment.

"For example, we may find a person has decreased strength in their arms. We can implement different steering options so they can exert less effort to steer their car," Gray says. "We have a fleet of vehicles that we can set up with the equipment they need so they can test it out and practice at Shepherd Center. We will train the

patient until they feel totally comfortable and safe, including accompanying them to get the equipment installed in their own vehicle and doing one more practice run at the shop once it's ready."



Lakisha Gray works with a client in the driving program. ▶ Physical therapist Gina Toffenetti-Guertin measures Robert Buckner to determine proper fit during his wheelchair seating evaluation.

Wheelchair Seating and Mobility Clinic

The Wheelchair Seating and Mobility Clinic provides in-depth evaluations, custom fittings for first-time and experienced wheelchair users, and ongoing modifications and support.

"It's a team effort between the therapist, patient, patient's caregivers and loved ones, and the equipment supplier," Gina Toffenetti-Guertin, PT, ATP, explains. "We are all trying to determine what will give the patient the greatest independence, comfort, and safety."

People who can benefit from assistive technology include those with:

- ▶ Mobility barriers due to traumatic injury, paralysis, amputation, or other conditions
- ▶ Visual barriers due to blindness or low vision
- ▶ Hearing loss
- ▶ Cognitive and learning disabilities
- ▶ Speech or communication-related disabilities
- ▶ Neurological conditions like cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, or traumatic brain injury
- ▶ Older adults experiencing age-related challenges

Pressure wounds are a common health risk for people who use wheelchairs. Therapists can use advanced pressure mapping technology to configure wheelchair parts to reduce the risk of pressure ulcers and ensure optimal pressure distribution.

"There is all this tech out there that people may not know about that can change their lives," Toffenetti-Guertin says. "For one person, it can look like using seat elevation to raise their wheelchair seat to cook a meal for their family at the stove. For another person, it can mean using power-assist on a wheelchair to get to class on time and finish their degree." *

1 Jared Grier and Tori Le Take Home ASCIP People's Choice Award

At this year's Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals (ASCIP) Innovation Lab, rehabilitation engineer Jared Grier and occupational therapist Tori Le, OTR/L, received the People's Choice Award for their Mouthstick Grabber.

Grier and Le designed the innovative device to help solve everyday challenges for people with full upper extremity paralysis. Compared to a traditional mouthstick, which often has a rubber or plastic

to start and stick with an accessible and individualized exercise program. Peer facilitators provided support and encouragement for the at-home program. Participants received exercise equipment, including a hand cycle and TheraBands, and an exercise tracking watch to track activity and stay accountable.

Preliminary findings are promising — participant retention for the 16-week online program was 80%. Additionally, participants progressively increased the amount of time they spent exercising over the course of the program, leveling off at 142 minutes per week.

The study's lead researcher was Mike Jones, Ph.D., and the study coordi-

3 Evan Sandler Defends Ph.D. Thesis in SCI Research

In December, Hulse Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Lab Research Fellow Evan Sandler, PT, DPT, defended his dissertation on using electrical stimulation to decrease potentially problematic muscle spasms people with SCIs experience after injury. Under the guidance of Edelle Field-Fote, PT, Ph.D., FAPTA, FASIA, Shepherd's director of SCI research, Sandler conducted his research with the goal of finding physical therapeutic interventions that can provide the same management as pharmaceuticals without negative side effects.

"Finding interventions, or tools in the toolbox, for OTs and PTs to use to improve the rehabilitation of patients is our main goal," Sandler says.

Sandler has worked with Field-Fote for over 10 years. They first met when he was in physical therapy school at the University of Miami, where she was his neurophysiology professor.

"Beyond the data collection, presentations, and journal publications, Dr. Field-Fote continues to promote an inclusive lab environment where everyone's ideas help to create the most ideal research environment for our team, but most importantly, our participants," Sandler says.

nator was Amber Lopez, MPH-PAPH. Collaborators included Craig Hospital and the Kessler Foundation. Participant Katie Brown says the program helped her build community and get active again after a cross-country move took her away from her adaptive sports community.

"The cool thing is there is no set of exercises you're given," Brown says. "They give you the tools, you find what works for you, and then we come together and talk about it. Some of the things people have shown me have been incredible. I thought, 'How have I not thought about this for the past 30 years?'"

mouthpiece at one end and a rubber tip at the other to use as a stylus, page-turner, typing aid, etc., the Mouthstick Grabber has a mouthpiece combined with a bite switch, which a user can use to close or open the attached grabber.

This innovative tool expands the functionality of a traditional mouthstick, allowing users to interact more effectively with their environment. This is the second year in a row that Grier and Le have won the People's Choice Award — they won last year for a self-feeding device for people with limited upper extremity movement to feed themselves at their own pace.

2 WOWii Program Helps People with SCIs Reduce Barriers to Exercise

Shepherd Center's research study, Workout on Wheels Internet Intervention (WOWii), examined the effectiveness of an online format for helping people with spinal cord injuries (SCIs) become active.

Participants met weekly on Zoom to collaborate with and motivate each other

The Mouthstick Grabber device has a mouthpiece with a bite switch, allowing the user to open or close the attached grabber.

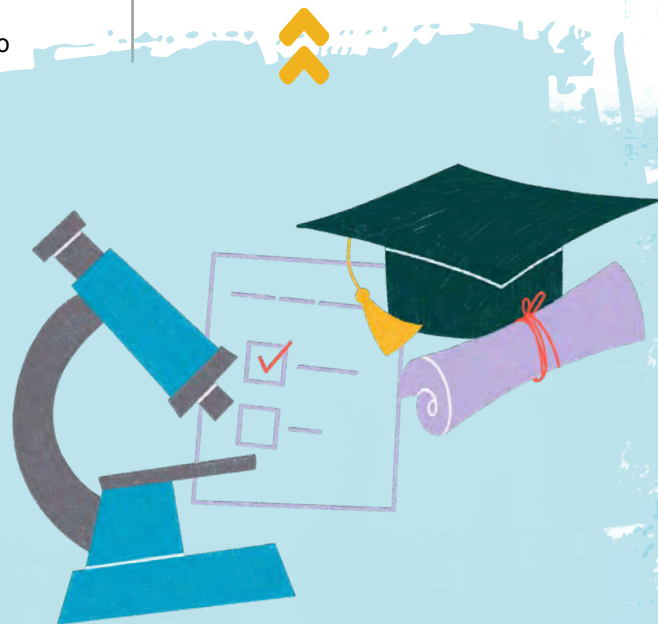


Photo by Bitia Honarvar

Helping Families Feel at Home

Housing Director **Linda Bristol** welcomes out-of-town families and patients to Shepherd Center's housing facilities.

Interview by Erin Kenney



work with the therapists to make sure we have the appropriate equipment in their rooms. We also take care of maintenance with help from engineering. We encourage families to reach out if they see any issues with the apartment. We want to make their stays as positive as possible.

How does housing impact patients and their families?

With most hospital stays, you're relatively close to your hospital, and you're not there very long. Our patients' stays are much longer. Having your family member right there with you makes such a huge difference. They're really grateful. When they come in, they're so overwhelmed and tired — they've been sleeping in an ICU room or traveling back and forth from a hotel or home. They are so happy to have a place close by to stay.

How has the new Arthur M. Blank Family Residences changed your role?

It's been busy and exciting. I've been hiring new people and helping train them. The building itself is amazing. And the whole housing team — Willie Brooks, Raeshonna Corder, Patrice Alexander, Carroll Griffin, Aungrae Elliot, Regina Sanders, Rondone Shaw, and Larry Robinson — they're awesome. They just take people under their wings, and they keep this place clean and moving.

What is one of the biggest challenges you face in your role?

The most significant challenge was telling someone we couldn't accommodate them the entire time the patient was here. Before the Blank Family Residences opened [in October], we could only house families for 30 days. So, we had people coming in and out a lot. We worked with them as they would check out and check back in to spread out their days. That's why it's so great that we have the new facility, and we'll be able to house families for the entire time they're here. *

EDUCATION

- Georgia Institute of Technology, Electrical Engineering

FUN FACTS

- Linda is an avid tennis and pickleball player.
- She has two daughters who also live in Atlanta.
- In addition to her degree from Georgia Tech, Linda has a French degree from the University of Virginia.

What is your role at Shepherd Center, and how did you get started in this role?

I'm the housing director, and I've been here nine years. When I was first introduced to Shepherd, the housing manager at the time took me on a tour. I remember walking down the hallways and her saying "Hi" to everyone and telling me, "We say 'Hi' a lot here." It was very welcoming, and I thought, "This place is awesome. I would like to work here."

What does a typical day in your role look like?

Normally, we evaluate who's being admitted that day, and we plan on greeting those families. In the Irene and George Woodruff Family Residence Center, we house patients in the Day Program and Pathways in addition to families, so we



Housing Manager Aungrae Elliot prepares an apartment for a family at the Blank Family Residences.



Shepherd Center
housing, caregiver training,
and transition support

Home Away From Home

make it easier for families to
support their loved ones

By Phillip Jordan

'We're in the right place'

The Butler Family



Butch and Debra Butler were exhausted by the time they arrived in Atlanta late on a Friday evening in November 2023. They'd spent the past month in a hospital in Greensboro, North Carolina, hoping and praying for their 39-year-old son to awaken.

Brent Butler, a longtime cyclist, sustained a traumatic brain injury — among a litany of other injuries — in a collision with a car while he was biking. By the time the Butler family got to Shepherd Center, Brent had yet to emerge from a minimally conscious state.

"Physically and emotionally, we were pretty low at that point," Butch recalls.

Thankfully, after the parents saw Brent checked in, all they had to do was head next door to the Irene and George Woodruff Family Residence Center for some much-needed sleep.

"That may not seem like much, but in that moment, it was a blessing," Butch says. "Especially for me. I've been a paraplegic myself for 20 years. I know how hard it is to find a truly accessible hotel room. At Shepherd Center, we had it waiting for us, right next to where our son would be."



Photos provided by the Butler family

The next morning, Butch and Debra were told to come over to Brent's room at 8 a.m. A quick roll through the parking deck and an elevator ride later, they were back by Brent's side. But not his bedside. That's because Brent's care team already had him up and sitting in a wheelchair.

"He still wasn't even awake, and they had to strap him in to stay upright," Butch says, "but he was upright. He hadn't been out of a bed for a month. I said something to one of Brent's nurses, and they said, 'Oh, we don't stay in bed at Shepherd Center.'"

"I turned to my wife and said, 'Yeah, we're in the right place.'"

(Clockwise from top left) Maggie Butler, Brent Butler, and family friend Meghan Maurer pose for a photo. ▶ Brent relaxes at home with the family dog, Laurel. He lives with his parents in Blowing Rock, North Carolina. ▶ Butch, Debra, Brent, and Maggie Butler in a therapy gym at Shepherd. The three family members have played a key role in Brent's recovery from a traumatic brain injury. ▶ Lauren Ross, OTR/L, MS, is an occupational therapist in Shepherd Center's Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program who worked with Brent during his rehabilitation. ▶ Lauren Ross and Alex Shandalov, a physical therapy and occupational therapy aide in the Acquired Brain Injury unit, work with Brent in a therapy session.

Family housing is one piece of the puzzle at Shepherd Center when it comes to helping families stay together, learn together, and prepare to return home together — all during what's likely the most trying and tiring time in their lives. This fall, Shepherd Center more than doubled its family housing capacity with the opening of the new Arthur M. Blank Family Residences — in part due to stories like the Butlers', that demonstrate the importance of family housing.

"The residences are a game-changer," says Lauren Ross, OTR/L, MS, an occupational therapist in Shepherd Center's Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program. "They help these new caregivers take care of themselves, too. And that's huge. Because when they're rested, they're able to spend more quality time with their loved one. They're able to participate fully and learn what they need to learn as caregivers."

Ross witnessed that first-hand with the Butler family — Butch and Debra, as well as Brent's sister Maggie — when she worked with Brent during his inpatient stay at Shepherd Center.

"They were so wonderful to work with and super open to being educated," Lauren says. "We did a lot of exercises to simulate their home environment in order to get them thinking about their needs at home and how they would navigate things returning to their daily lives."

When Brent was discharged to Shepherd Pathways, a comprehensive

outpatient rehabilitation program for people recovering from brain injury, he "moved in" with his family in the Woodruff Residence residence — getting a taste for the transition home. Today, the Butlers still live together — a development that would have been quite unexpected a little over a year ago. Butch and Debra moved Brent in with them, to their home in Blowing Rock, North Carolina. Maggie is there almost all the time, too, essentially moving in from her home in Asheville.

"We're a tight-knit little team," Butch says.

They're thankful that Brent is active and engaged, with his sense of humor fully intact. His short-term memory, while spotty, continues to improve. And they recently took a road trip to a big car show — a treat for Brent, who is a massive Formula 1 racing fan.

The transition has been smoother than anticipated, something the family attributes to being fully engaged in Brent's rehabilitation at Shepherd Center.

"It all started with the housing," Butch says. "That took off so much worry and stress, and we were just able to be engaged in the rehab process. That made all the difference in the world. When you're in it right alongside him, you're learning so much. You're learning how to be the caregiver. You're getting a sense of what to be prepared for back home."



Photo by Bita Honarvar

'An absolute godsend'

Amanda and Earl Lyon



Photos by Kristy Vest

Amanda Lyon has been an ER trauma nurse. She has provided hospice care in a Veterans Affairs hospital. Her husband Earl is a Marine Corps veteran, nurse, and paramedic.

In short, they have seen and heard some things when it comes to life-changing situations. But even they had never witnessed the trifecta of traumas Amanda experienced on Nov. 4, 2020.

First, a heart attack. Compounded by an anoxic brain injury suffered during her resuscitation. And then a T-10 spinal cord injury — likely caused by a blood clot moving to her spinal cord during CPR — that resulted in paraplegia.

Thankfully, Amanda stabilized during a two-week stay at Johnson City Medical Center, near the Lyons' home in Gray, Tennessee, and soon transferred to Shepherd Center.

Shepherd's family housing was an "absolute godsend," she says, as both Earl and her mom were able to be near while she was inpatient.

Later, Amanda was able to join them there once she graduated from inpatient to the SCI Day Program.

Throughout her journey, Amanda appreciated that her complex case was one that still fit easily within Shepherd's expertise and collaborative team approach to patient care.

"That's what's great about Shepherd Center," she says. "They've seen it before, and they'll see it again. Everything they did was about anticipating what life would be like at home,

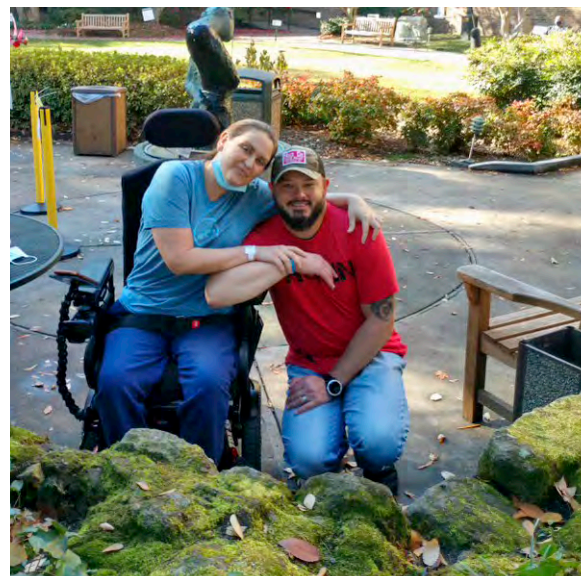


Photo provided by Amanda Lyon

“They’ve seen it before, and they’ll see it again. Everything they did was about anticipating what life would be like at home, preparing me to be as independent as possible, and to learn how to adapt in order to achieve that.”

— Amanda Lyon

preparing me to be as independent as possible, and to learn how to adapt in order to achieve that.”

Amanda is right about that intentionality at Shepherd Center. In fact, each family receives a form when their loved one is planning to return home. The form has questions about the housing the patient will return to once they leave. Families can supply pictures, too. That information helps Shepherd staff tailor their therapies for specific challenges.

It also enables staff members to give practical advice for home modifications and safety strategies.

“We can provide information that’s as simple as where to buy a grab bar to something as detailed as the ratio needed to build a ramp or instructions on widening doors,” says Lauren Ross, OTR/L, MS, an occupational therapist in the brain injury program. “Or even share advice on where families can find more aesthetically appealing modified furniture if that’s a mental boost for a loved one.”

Shepherd Center also offers home modification classes and home lab classes that recreate home-transition scenarios. Classes dive deep into assistive technologies — such as smart devices, home automation systems, and Bluetooth features — that can make life easier at home.

“We try to get families to think about these things early on so that they’re ready by the time they leave,” Ross says. “It’s about supporting the caregivers and amplifying patients’ long-term independence. We want them safe and confident at home, not back in a hospital.”

In Amanda’s case, early conversations at Shepherd Center helped her and Earl realize what home modifications they would need to have ready.

Amanda also credits her recreational therapy team with helping her figure out new ways to achieve things that used to come easily.

“As much as possible, they prepared me for what life would really be like at home,” Amanda says. “In OT, I learned skills to navigate our bathroom, brushing my teeth, getting dressed. At our Shepherd family residence, we got that first little feeling like we were really living at home. There were things we could figure out for ourselves, but know that help was still nearby if we needed it.”

Of course, all of the housing and technology and know-how don’t matter if the human element is missing. And beyond all else, it’s the people at Shepherd Center who impressed the Lyons the most.

“You know how every once in a while you meet someone and they’re just a phenomenal human being, and it really



(Clockwise from left) Amanda Lyon and her husband, Earl Lyon, near their home in Gray, Tennessee. Amanda credits her care team and the family residences at Shepherd for making her transition home as smooth as possible. ▶ Amanda and her husband in the Anna and Hays Mershon Secret Garden during her recovery from a T-10 spinal cord injury.

blows you away?” Earl asks. “Think about how often that happens. Every once in a blue moon? At Shepherd, it was a daily occurrence. Somebody every day impressed me there. And I’m not too easy to impress. Everybody was kind. Everybody treated you like a human — not a patient or an account number. And I know there’s a lot else that goes into it, but when you’re in that kind of situation, how you’re treated means an awful lot.”

'I'll just get back up'

Erina Tandy and Clara McCoy



Three years ago, Clara McCoy was at home in Sacramento, California, when she got the call that her daughter, 44-year-old Erina Tandy, had had a stroke.

Clara traveled cross-country the next day and stayed throughout Erina's inpatient rehabilitation and time at Shepherd Pathways. Throughout it all, Clara — along with her friend, Jan Beach, and Erina's sister, Allison Kozel — lived in one of Shepherd Center's family residences.

"I don't know what we would have done otherwise," Clara says. "We couldn't go back and forth to California, and we didn't have family in Atlanta. We were very thankful for those accommodations."

The proximity allowed Clara to come over most mornings before Erina's

therapy began — to braid her daughter's hair and get her ready for the day. COVID restrictions were still firmly in place in 2021, so the family spent lots of time outside enjoying the Anna and Hays Mershon Secret Garden. Clara and Jan both play the ukulele, and the two soon had a small group of players together for informal garden sessions

— with other patients and families enjoying the music.

Care-wise, Clara credits Erina's team with helping the family learn how to best assist Erina before she re-learned to walk. But Clara also notes that what they learned went far beyond wheelchairs and transfers.

"They were always thinking ahead about what would be helpful for her in the future," Clara says. "Giving us tricks for compression garments, showing us how to use new equipment. Helping us navigate the insurance and social security side of things, too. They just helped us through the maze of it all. And there was a sweetness and a caring in everything. We felt it from everyone."

Erina was 44 when she had her stroke. A mother with two young children, the California native had been a longtime reporter and anchor on different TV

stations. She settled in Savannah, where she began working at the prestigious Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD). The year before her stroke, she had been named SCAD's new executive director of inclusion.

Now 48, Erina's speech is still returning, but she's already living a vibrant, independent life once again. She's involved in her children's lives, has taken up golf, loves Savannah Bananas baseball games, and attends the Savannah Film Festival. Erina has also participated in a pair of Adventure Skills Workshops through Shepherd Center, picking up a love of watersports. And she's driving again with adaptive technology — including roundtrips between Savannah and Atlanta when she has follow-up appointments at Shepherd Center.

As Clara puts it with a laugh: "Her determination is crazy — her tenacity. I would have been whining every day through rehab. But she was just relentless."



Photos provided by Clara McCoy

Last year, Clara and other family members celebrated Erina's progress with a trip to Ireland, Clara's homeland. They visited with family members in County Cork, took a ferry to France, and even visited the Louvre.

"It's amazing to see where she is now," Clara says of her daughter. "When we first took Erina back to Savannah, I was always worried about her falling. She would tell me: 'So what if I do? I'll just get back up.' That's Erina. She's going to make it work no matter what." *

“ What Did You Bring to Shepherd to Make It Feel More Like Home? ”

“ My guy (Jeffrey Simmons) brought his guitar! ”

— Kendra Riffle

“ I brought a few things from home to make it feel as cozy as possible. I love using a diffuser for smells like lavender to relax after a long day at rehab... (I also brought) a few throw blankets for the couch and chair to have a few reminders of home. ”

— Shawna Starks

“ Cards, plants, blankets, pillows, and books. ”

— Edwina Anderson

“ I brought pictures of loved ones, my soccer jersey, stuffed animals, Roku, and an Alexa so I could voice activate calling my family at home. ”

— Brooke Stewart



(clockwise from top left) ▶ Erina Tandy and her mom, Clara McCoy, spend time in the kitchen in their apartment at the Woodruff Family Residence Center. ▶ Clara and Erina pose for a picture with Erina's kids, Macie and Cole. ▶ Clara and Erina enjoy time in the Secret Garden. ▶ Erina's friends and colleagues sent her messages of encouragement, which she posted on her bulletin board.



Join the conversation!

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Kristine Werner Ozug, 46, is a powerful advocate for people with multiple sclerosis (MS).

She participates in legislative advocacy and clinical research and educates the public about this autoimmune disease that affects nearly 1 million people in the United States alone. It's an impressive body of work, but as she points out, it has been a long road to get here.

Kristine began experiencing symptoms at the age of 17 when she was on the tennis team at Berry College.

Kristine's technical and healthcare communications background prepared her to understand complicated research journals about MS. In the beginning, this helped her research and understand her own disease, but now she's using her skills to shape MS research.

"More and more, organizations are seeing the value in having patients have some sort of input in helping in the research process," she says. "Shepherd's great because they have lots of opportunities for different studies."

For more than a year, Kristine has volunteered at RealTalk

MS, the most listened-to podcast in the world for people affected by MS. The podcast discusses everything from the latest research to daily life with the disease. It is hosted by Jon Strum, whose wife passed away in 2020 after her battle with MS.

"Volunteering for the podcast has been a great opportunity," Kristine says. "Jon has a view from a caregiver perspective, and I have



"I would do one or two sprints and then start dry heaving. I'd lose my footing doing drills on the stairs," Kristine says. "It was all chalked up to being dehydrated or needing to be in better shape."

The issues progressed during her twenties.

"I started noticing severe fatigue, tingling in my lip, my left leg was numb, and I was losing my voice, which we later discovered is due to a paralyzed vocal cord," she recalls. "When I started forgetting things, it prompted me to see a neurologist."

While several of Kristine's clinical tests came back abnormal, there was no definitive proof that pointed to MS at the time. In

(From left to right) In 2019, Kristine was honored with the National MS Society Georgia District Activist of the Year Award. The following year, she received recognition on the Georgia Senate floor for her work. ▶ Kristine married her husband, John Ozug, in 2021. The beautiful ceremony took place in Hawaii. ▶ Kristine helped plan, execute, and model in the MS Association of America Women of Action fashion show. The event raised money to improve the lives of those impacted by multiple sclerosis in the community. *(from left to right, top row)* Randie Seigel, Dr. Deborah Backus, Rebecca Duguid, Rachael Fenich, Heather Breeden, Lynsey Barron, Mandy Peterson-Tice. *(bottom row)* Kristine Werner Ozug, Linda Levy, Tiffany Poole, Karen Carera (Kristine's sister), Linda Werner (Kristine's mom).

Finding Renewed Purpose

For more than a decade after her multiple sclerosis (MS) diagnosis, Kristine Werner Ozug has advocated on behalf of the MS community.

By Damjana Alverson

2012, she decided to visit Ben Thrower, M.D., at the Andrew C. Carlos Multiple Sclerosis Institute at Shepherd Center.

"I'll never forget my first appointment with Dr. Thrower," Kristine says. "I cried, not because I was told I had MS, but because it was a relief that someone believed me and I finally had a diagnosis. I've been going to Shepherd ever since."

Unfortunately, Kristine's symptoms forced her to end her dream career in communications.

"[My career] was gone. And so was my identity. My relevance. I had to stop work for the reasons most people living with MS do: fatigue and cognitive issues," Kristine explains. "MS is a disease that constantly takes, but it also gives in a way that is sometimes hard to explain and identify in the moment."

Since her diagnosis, Kristine has found renewed purpose in activism on behalf of the MS community.

a view of somebody living with MS. We complement each other very well."

She has participated in advocacy work with the National MS Society at the state and federal levels, including giving testimony for legislative healthcare issues. Kristine has also come to love helping people with another type of advocacy: self-advocacy.

"I don't give medical advice — I leave that to people who work at places like Shepherd Center," Kristine explains. "I listen to people who are newly diagnosed and offer a plan and options for the next steps. I'm honored that they trust me at such a vulnerable time."

While reflecting on helping others during their most vulnerable moments, Kristine remembered what it meant to her when she first met the team at Shepherd.

"Shepherd saved my life in many ways. It wasn't just my diagnosis," Kristine says. "It was also helping me see my strength to navigate everything that has happened to me. I wouldn't have morphed into the person I am today if it wasn't for them."

She adds, "MS took from me, but I've also received so many gifts. Like the people I've met and the connections I've made that wouldn't have happened otherwise. I can help people and serve." ✨

Photos provided by Kristine Werner Ozug.

Shepherd Alums:

From “I Can’t” to “I Can”

By Sara Baxter and Erin Kenney

Dylan Sims

Tupelo, MS

“I put myself through the wringer a lot,” says Dylan Sims. “I embrace a challenge, even if I think something has a 20% success rate, I’m still going to give it a whirl.”

Case in point, the 32-year-old’s adventurous lifestyle. While in college, he was a bull rider. He loves spending time outdoors, including backpacking and canoeing. But perhaps one of Dylan’s biggest challenges came after serving in the Army for four years.

A hip injury ended his military service in 2017, beginning a stretch of difficult years for Dylan. He struggled to adjust to post-military life, got divorced, and lost friends to suicide. His decision to get his master’s degree in recreation therapy was more than career-driven — it was a way to start a new chapter.

His degree created space for him to spend more time outside, which helped Dylan improve his mental health. But he had some cognitive challenges that lingered. After increasingly worrying amnesic episodes, doctors diagnosed Dylan with early onset dementia, a diagnosis that changed his life. He was only 30 years old.

He quit a job he loved at a nonprofit in New Hampshire and began traveling the country, trying to maximize the time he had left. Then, his Wounded Warrior Project case manager referred him to Shepherd Center’s SHARE Military Initiative. During his program evaluation, SHARE Medical Director Russell Gore, M.D., questioned Dylan’s dementia diagnosis and started treating him for a brain injury.

Things got better. Dylan’s cognitive abilities improved. His therapists encouraged his creative writing, which helped him process his emotions. SHARE helped Dylan get back on the horse, literally. Equestrian therapy allowed him to ride horses again, something he hadn’t done since before his hip injury.

“(SHARE) ended up being very validating,” Dylan says. “After I got my mental health under control, there were still so many things that I couldn’t get to go right internally. Since being there, it’s been a complete 180 as far as my outlook for the future.”

Now, for the first time in a long time, Dylan is back in his hometown of Tupelo, Mississippi. He’s spending time with family, gearing up for a potential Appalachian Trail thru-hike, and writing — this year, he published a novel and a poetry collection. Most of all, he’s excited for his future.



Elizabeth Newton

Atlanta, Georgia

On Aug. 26, 2023, Elizabeth Newton fell, resulting in a shattered wrist, misaligned jaw, split open chin, and multiple bruises on her face. The broken wrist required surgery. As she recovered, she continued to experience dizziness, double vision, memory problems, and extreme fatigue. She chalked it up to side effects from the medications prescribed to her post-surgery.

Things did not improve. She was sensitive to light and noise in a way she never was before. She felt like she was floating and wasn’t sure what was wrong. In her professional life, Elizabeth is a jewelry designer who founded enewton design, a popular jewelry company. But after her injury, she was unable to work.

When she went to see a doctor for ear pain due to her misaligned jaw, he told her she most likely had a concussion.

“I was surprised,” she says. “At the hospital, they did an MRI to rule out a brain bleed, but I didn’t know I had sustained a concussion.”

The doctor referred her to Shepherd Center’s Complex Concussion Clinic, where she began therapy to address her symptoms. Right away, she was impressed with Shepherd Center.

“The experience was very specialized to my needs,” Elizabeth says. “They took the time to listen to me and figure out what was going on, and then they tailored an individualized plan to get me where I was before the fall.”

Elizabeth worked with occupational, physical, and speech therapists on memory, balance, and strength issues and slowly began to see improvements.

“I liked how they measured my progress. Some weeks it was hard for me to feel a difference. Being able to see measured progress helped me stay positive throughout my concussion,” Elizabeth says. “It was also nice to be in a clinic where they were focused on one thing — getting me better.”

Now, more than a year later, Elizabeth has nearly fully recovered and is back at the helm of her company full time.

“I’m a fifth-generation Atlantan,” Elizabeth says. “I knew Shepherd Center was here, but I didn’t really know what it was about. We are so blessed to have a place like Shepherd Center in Atlanta.”



Keshavious Tumbling

Ray City, Georgia

When Keshavious Tumbling was in the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Day Program at Shepherd Center, a typical day usually went something like this: he’d wake up and get dressed, complete a couple of morning physical therapy sessions, grab pizza from the cafeteria for lunch (his favorite), then spend time with an occupational therapist before working on his studies.

The charismatic high school senior excelled in the Day Program. As a talented student-athlete — his high school baseball team won the state championship in May — he was committed to his therapy and staying on top of his schoolwork, not to mention befriending everyone he met. His dedication and positive outlook played a key role in his recovery from his SCI.

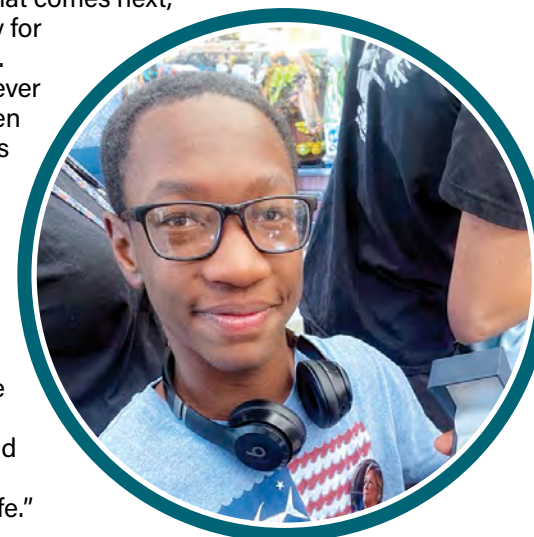
The morning Keshavious sustained his SCI started as any other day. He was at football practice, doing drills, and hanging out with his teammates. But then, in one drill, he had an awkward collision with another player.

“I felt my neck snap,” he says. “I fell on the ground in slow motion.”

He was immediately transported, first by ambulance, then helicopter, to UF Health Shands Hospital in Gainesville, Florida. After nine days, he transferred to Shepherd Center. He had sustained an incomplete C3-C4 injury.

Once he started therapy, Keshavious’ mobility improved rapidly — he went from using a powerchair on his arrival to using no mobility aids at all. In Day Program, his therapists introduced skipping and jogging. Now, he has his sights set on running again. When Keshavious prepared to go home in September, he was eager to return to school and to keep working toward his goals of joining the Air Force and becoming an orthopedic surgeon. But he was looking forward to little things, too, like sleeping in his own bed again. No matter what comes next, he’s ready for the future.

“You never know when bad things will happen,” he says. “Always keep your head up. Always be nice to others, and you’ll get through life.”



Clarissa Cartwright

Brookhaven, Georgia

When Clarissa Cartwright began her rehabilitation in Shepherd Center’s Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program, the first thing the therapists did was stand her up for a walk down the hall. This was no small feat. Since her surgery, Clarissa had not been able to leave her hospital bed. She hadn’t yet been able to sit up.

“I was shocked they could get me to walk on my very first session,” she said. “I couldn’t even sit on my own without falling over.”

In June 2023, Clarissa had surgery to remove a massive benign brain tumor. When she awoke from surgery, she discovered her left side was paralyzed due to an acquired brain injury (ABI) from the surgery.

Doctors were optimistic that she would regain function, but it would be a long journey. Her mother researched rehabilitation facilities for her daughter and was impressed with Shepherd Center. Clarissa was admitted to Shepherd’s Intensive Care Unit on July 10, 2023.

Clarissa, an active single mother of two boys, landlord of two properties, and a business systems analyst, had one important goal: to regain her independence. She was also determined to walk upon discharge.

She worked with therapists on balance, strength, fine motor skills, and functional activities. She learned to transfer from her wheelchair to the bed, the toilet, and a car. She also worked with a speech therapist on short-term memory, divided attention, and executive functioning skills.

“Everyone at Shepherd Center was so positive and encouraging, the perfect environment for healing,” Clarissa says. “It was very motivating. I felt safe there. I was part of a community and everyone wanted me to succeed.”

And succeed she did. She gradually regained her strength and balance and walked with the aid of a walker. Her memory improved. Clarissa was discharged from the ABI floor on Aug. 31, and a week later, she walked independently into Shepherd Pathways, Shepherd Center’s comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation program for people recovering from brain injury.

In addition to her rehab at Pathways, she completed Shepherd’s Driving Evaluation and Rehabilitation Program to get back on the road. At Pathways, she also prepared to transition back to work.

“I am so grateful to Shepherd Center. It was the perfect choice,” Clarissa says. “They gave me my life back. To me, they are real-life superheroes.”



A Celebration Years in the Making

The ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Arthur M. Blank Family Residences gave board members, alumni, staff, and donors the chance to celebrate a major milestone.

By Jon Roxland



A New Chapter

Shepherd Center considers families and loved ones to be an essential part of the rehabilitation journey. Their presence provides comfort and encouragement to patients while also allowing them to receive training in preparation for their loved ones' return home. However, more than half of Shepherd patients come from outside of Georgia. For years, Shepherd Center has facilitated having family nearby during rehabilitation by providing donor-funded housing for families who live more than 60 miles from Shepherd Center for 30 days. But, the average length of stay for patients is nearly twice that.

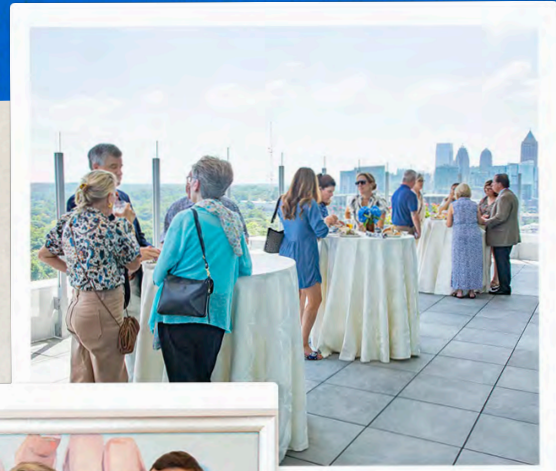
The new Arthur M. Blank Family Residences, made possible in part by a generous \$50 million capital grant from the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, adds 165 units to Shepherd's housing capacity. Shepherd Center can now provide donor-funded housing to families for the entire length of their loved one's treatment if both the patient and family live over 60 miles from the hospital.

Ribbon Cutting

On the morning of Aug. 27, Shepherd Center board members, campaign donors, alumni, employees, and leadership gathered at the new Arthur M. Blank Family Residences for a ribbon-cutting ceremony. A short program began with a welcome from Justin Jones, co-chair of Pursuing Possible: The Campaign for Shepherd Center and a member of the hospital's board of directors. Justin highlighted the Shepherd Center community's generous philanthropic support that has made the campaign so successful. Sarah Morrison, PT, MBA, MHA, Shepherd Center's chief executive officer at the time, then recognized the excellent work of the hospital's construction partners, Brasfield & Gorrie, Wood Partners, and Rule Joy Trammell + Rubio architects, throughout the process and emphasized the tremendous impact that this new building will have on Shepherd patients and their families for years to come.

Former Shepherd Center patient Amy Ewing spoke about her recovery journey at Shepherd and the many challenges she has encountered finding accessible housing when making her annual trips from New York to participate in Shepherd Center's Beyond Therapy® program. Amy said she was comforted knowing that many future patients and families would not have to face the same challenges she did. She emphasized the vital role housing plays in the overall recovery process.

Photos by William Twitty



(From top to bottom) Ribbon cutting attendees enjoy the new Alana Shepherd Skydeck Terrace. ▶ Amy Ewing poses with her family in front of her paintings on display in the Blank Family Residences conference room. ▶ Sarah Morrison, Dr. David Apple, Alana Shepherd, and Jamie Shepherd stand together for the ceremonial ribbon cutting.



"When you experience an injury like my own, it is so entirely disorienting. But it's not just you who experiences it all, it's your family ultimately feeling the same loss, confusion, and fear," Amy said during her remarks. "But then a place like this introduces you to all these new things to love. That's what this beautiful building will be offering future patients."

Following Amy's comments, Morrison invited Shepherd Center co-founders Alana Shepherd and David Apple, M.D., as well as Jamie Shepherd, MBA, MHA, FACHE, then president and chief operating officer, to join her for the ceremonial ribbon cutting.

Jamie Shepherd concluded the program by expressing his continued appreciation for all campaign donors on behalf of his family and the entire Shepherd Center team and inviting all guests to tour the building's guest rooms and community spaces.

Accessible & Elevated

The 16-story Arthur M. Blank Family Residences were meticulously designed by Shepherd's architect and construction partners — Rule Joy Trammell + Rubio, Wood Partners, and Brasfield & Gorrie — not just to be aesthetically beautiful, but also to be fully accessible and comfortable for residents. Each apartment has a full kitchen, complete with a dishwasher, and in-unit laundry. The outlets are installed higher than standard outlet placements, making them more easily reachable for people who use wheelchairs. Bathrooms include roll-in showers and space-saving pocket doors equipped with accessible handles. Plus, the beautiful, modern furniture and finishes create a peaceful environment so families can focus on their loved ones' recovery.



\$50,000,000

grant received for the project from the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation



165

new accessible housing units in the Arthur M. Blank Family Residences

2 minutes

to drive from Blank Family Residences to the main Shepherd Campus

Photos by Chris Walker and Kelsey Harris

Creating Community

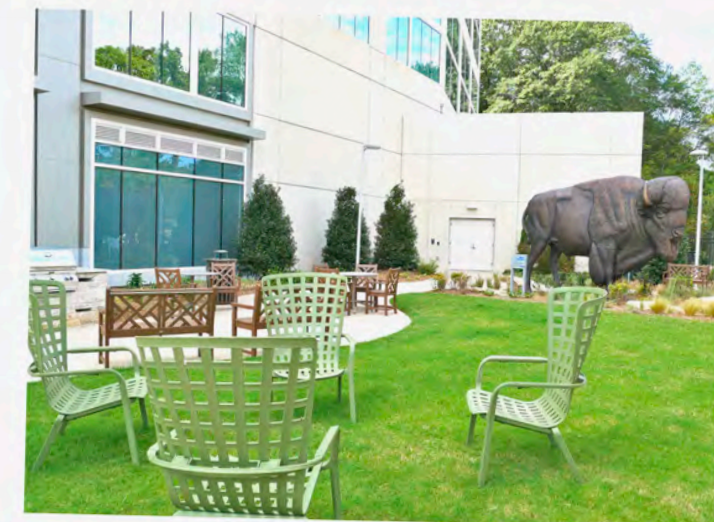
The apartments at the Blank Family Residences offer a private, tranquil environment for families to rest during their loved ones' stay at Shepherd Center. And while solitude can be important for family members to unpack the flood of emotions following catastrophic injury or illness, having community support can be equally crucial during the recovery process. That's why the Blank Family Residences include several common spaces, including meeting rooms, a shared kitchen, a library, a recreation room with a children's corner, and an outdoor garden and grilling area. These communal spaces offer families the chance to establish a support network with each other for their time at Shepherd Center and beyond.

"When you experience an injury like my own, it is so entirely disorienting. But it's not just you who experiences it all, it's your family ultimately feeling the same loss, confusion, and fear. But then a place like this introduces you to all these new things to love. That's what this beautiful building will be offering future patients."

— Amy Ewing, Former Shepherd Center spinal cord injury patient



Want to see the space for yourself? Scan the QR code to see a video from the ribbon-cutting ceremony.





2024 Legendary Party Honors Arthur Blank

Shepherd Center's black-tie gala raised \$2.5M for the Arthur M. Blank Family Residences.

Upon arriving at this year's Legendary Party, guests were transported to a faraway place. Greeted by a grand, traditional Moorish arch, and then crossing into the ballroom decorated with rich colors, arabesque motifs, and exotic flowers, guests were in for a delightful evening made complete with a delicious dinner and live entertainment.

This year's theme, "Journey to Morocco," celebrated the rich and colorful culture, traditions, and landscapes of Morocco, while also highlighting the journey patients make during their rehabilitation. The theme was beautifully executed by event chairs Sherry and David Abney, who were introduced to the hospital through a tour with Shepherd Center co-founder Alana Shepherd.

"The theme Journey to Morocco — with Morocco being a vibrant, faraway place with the most amazingly gorgeous doors — echoed Shepherd Center, through whose doors patients are restored for their 'journey' in life," says Sherry Abney.

Shepherd Center Junior Committee co-chair, Virginia Brown, spoke highly of this year's event, especially the Moroccan-inspired theme.

"The theme was so stunning, the venue looked gorgeous, and the band was incredible," Brown says.

This year's event raised \$2.5 million for the Arthur M. Blank Family Residences, thanks to the generous support of the party's guests, a diverse mix of long-time supporters and first-time attendees.

Photos by Ben Rose



(top row, from left to right) Sherry and David Abney were event chairs for this year's gala. ▶ When guests arrived at this year's Legendary Party, they were greeted by a grand, traditional Moorish arch. ▶ Sarah, Alana, and Jamie Shepherd. ▶ Former patient Devin Bateman, with his parents Celeste and Don Bateman. ▶ *(center)* This year's theme, Journey to Morocco, included beautiful decorations with rich colors and arabesque motifs. ▶ *(bottom row, from left to right)* John Bryant, Tony Marzullo, Bill Nichols, Clark Dean, Chaitra Bryant, Robyn Marzullo, and Kory Nichols. ▶ Margaret Wilkerson, Pat Tuff, Ginger Reed, Sherry Abney, Mary Anne Walser, Janet Dickerson, Sarah Shepherd, and Louise Smith.





Arthur Blank was the honoree. For Sherry Abney, Blank being the honoree made the event "that much more special," she says.

The program included Shepherd Center CEO Jamie Shepherd and event chairs thanking guests for supporting and attending the event. Next, guests enjoyed a three-course meal provided by Legendary Events.

After dinner, attendees moved on to the dance floor with music by The Big Beyond. The Legendary Party is a time for supporters to unwind and have fun, and it also raises awareness and funds for Shepherd Center's vast array of patient and community programs.

"Events like these honor those who support such a wonderful cause while introducing new attendees to what Shepherd Center is able to do," says David Abney.

Shepherd Center Junior Committee kept the party going for Legendary Late Night, which included late-night bites, college football, a 360-photo booth, and more music from The Big Beyond.

"This event is always special for Shepherd Center as a whole, as well as for the Junior Committee,



to get a glimpse of all the amazing fundraising efforts and successes of the Foundation. We're already so excited for next year," says Brown, who helped lead planning for the Junior Committee after party.

The 2025 Legendary Party will be held on Nov. 1 at Flourish, with Shanna and Bill Bradley serving as co-chairs. The event will fund the expansion of a new Acquired Brain Injury Unit. *

(clockwise from top left) Andy Greene, Shauna Greene, Lisa Zook, Cameron Ryall, Fay Twersky, Jill Blair, Vicki Canakaris, and Ron Canakaris. ▶ Ahead of guests arriving, tables were set for a delicious three course dinner provided by Legendary Events. ▶ Virginia Brown, Kathryn Lengel, Schell Montville, and Lollie Davis ▶ Brad Parker, Craig Ross, Wendy Stengel, Sarah Shepherd, Will Stengel, Jamie Shepherd, Chris Galla, Ashlie Parker, Heather Ross, and Holly Galla. ▶ David and Sherry Abney with Shanna and Bill Bradley. ▶ Guests danced the night away thanks to music from The Big Beyond. ▶ (opposite page) The Moroccan theme was executed beautifully by event chairs Sherry and David Abney. A special thank you to them and our event sponsors.

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A Great Day on the Green

Shepherd Center Cup Celebrates 40 Years

By Erin Kennev

This year, on Sept. 23, the Shepherd Center Cup celebrated its 40th anniversary. But before it was time to tee off, participants paused for a moment to remember one of the tournament's biggest supporters over its four decades.

Duncan Beard, a longtime Shepherd Center supporter, volunteer, and emeritus board member, died in August. His close friend and former Shepherd Center patient, Tommy Vance, opened this year's tournament with remarks paying tribute to Duncan, who regularly served on — and, in 2008, chaired — the golf tournament's planning committee.

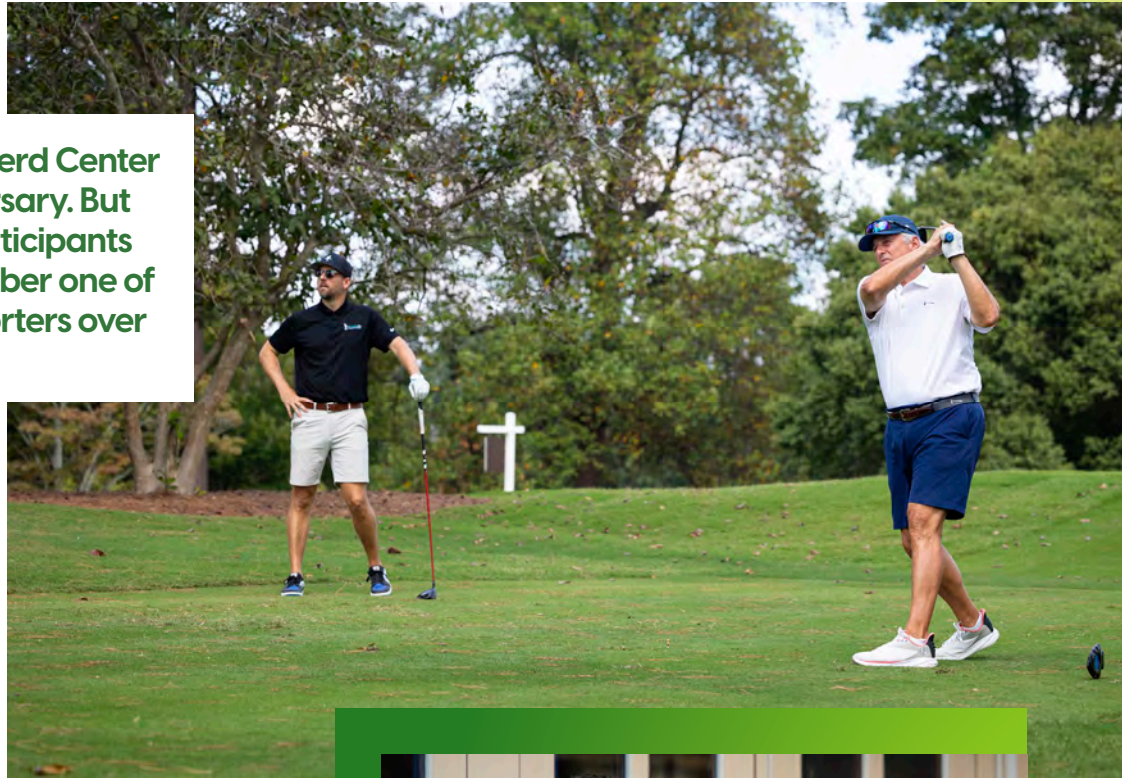
After a bittersweet moment celebrating Duncan's legacy, participants took the course at Cherokee Town & Country Club. This year's sold-out event had 230 golfers and raised over \$315,000 for Shepherd Center's Recreation Therapy Program. The largest program of its kind in the country, the Recreation Therapy Program helps patients with temporary or permanent disabilities lead healthy and active lifestyles through adaptive activities, outings, and individualized goal-setting to get patients back to what they love.

Miller Peer chaired this year's event, and his favorite part of leading the committee was working with the other members toward the common goal of supporting Shepherd.

"Beyond the dollars raised, we were able to bring incredible exposure to the good Shepherd Center does day in and day out — while many of us have never had a reason yet to utilize Shepherd Center, knowing we have this world-class facility in our backyard brings us all a measure of peace and pride," Miller says.

After a hot day on the golf course, participants gathered for the tournament's closing dinner. LPGA professional and golf instructor Greta Anderson, Ph.D., LPGA, spoke about her treatment at the Andrew C. Carlos Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Institute and how it empowered her after her diagnosis.

Next year's tournament is scheduled for Sept. 15 at Cherokee Town & Country Club.



Photos by Erica Aitken

(top) Attendees enjoyed a beautiful day on the golf course at Cherokee Town & Country Club. ► At the closing dinner, LPGA professional and golf instructor Greta Anderson spoke about her experience receiving multiple sclerosis treatment at Shepherd.

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2024 Conlan Cup

Construction company raises \$250,000 for Shepherd Center



The Conlan Company, a contractor based in Atlanta, works on construction projects all over the country. But on Sept. 30, they spent a day away from their offices and job sites and hit the golf course for the third annual Conlan Cup, a golf tournament that raises money for Shepherd Center's Patient Assistance Fund, which helps cover basic needs that insurance does not pay for or that the patient cannot afford.

The company has a personal connection to Shepherd — David Staley, the company's chief operating officer, came to Shepherd Center for rehabilitation for Guillain-Barré syndrome. After seeing his recovery and wanting to create a way for employees to give back to the community, company executives launched the annual tournament and made Shepherd Center the beneficiary.

This year's tournament, held at The Golf Club of Georgia in Alpharetta, included 224 participants. The tournament also featured a special guest, NBA legend Julius Irving — known to many by his nickname, Dr. J — who was there to visit with participants and auction off some signed jerseys. All in all, the tournament raised over \$250,000 for the Patient Assistance Fund.

"Supporting Shepherd through our annual Conlan Cup is a highlight of our year," says Mark Kunst, vice president of the Conlan Company. "Our team continues to rally around the cause, and we look forward to continuing this in the future."



(clockwise from top left) Shepherd Center Foundation staff members had smiling faces to greet golfers for a beautiful day on the green. ▶ Former Shepherd Center patient Tommy Vance opened this year's tournament with remarks paying tribute to Duncan Beard, his close friend and a longtime supporter of Shepherd Center. ▶ Attendees enjoyed a beautiful day on the golf course at Cherokee Town & Country Club. ▶ A central part of this year's tournament was celebrating the life of Duncan Beard, a longtime supporter of Shepherd Center. ▶ Miller Peer, this year's event chair, addresses the crowd.



(clockwise from left) This year's Conlan Cup tournament had 224 participants and raised money for the Shepherd Center Patient Assistance Fund. ▶ Conlan Company employees, Ashley Oakley, Jeremy Struck, Michael Nanney, Julie Osterland, Charles King, and Tony Dollerschell enjoy the golf tournament. ▶ Julius Irving, pictured here with Conlan Company Executive Vice President Stuart Price, was a special guest at this year's tournament and auctioned off signed jerseys.



Fishing Fun

2024 Soque Slam Brings Participants Together for a Day on the Water



The Soque River, a winding tributary of the Chattahoochee located in Habersham County, Georgia, is famous for its populations of rainbow trout and brown trout, leading anglers from around the region to make their way to the river for fly fishing. And on Oct. 26, so did Shepherd Center staff, alumni, patients, and supporters.

Anglers put on their waders for the second annual Soque Slam, an invitational fishing rodeo and concert fundraiser benefiting Shepherd Center. Waymaker Off-Road Wheelchairs donated track-chairs for the event, giving Shepherd alumni the opportunity to join in the competition. While the fly-fishers tried to catch a prize-winning trout, spectators enjoyed the warm, sunny weather and North Georgia's fall foliage.

Multiple guides assisted the fishing teams as they competed for prizes. \$5,000 was awarded to the Hawkins/Batts team for having the most fish on hook at 168 fish. Thomas Bailey was the proud recipient of the Johnny Morris Largest Brown Trout award, winning the \$7,500 prize. The winners graciously donated their winnings back to Shepherd Center, and the donation was matched by the Budnick Family Charitable Fund bringing the total to \$25,000.

After the tournament, attendees enjoyed a delicious BBQ dinner donated and catered by the Andee's Army team of John Poulos, Furman Wood, William Wood, Keith Guthrie, Scott Martin, and Warner Ray. Attendees ended the night with music by Slater Nalley followed by the event headliner, The Futurebirds, a rock band based in Athens. In total, this year's Soque Slam raised over \$350,000, and plans are underway for the next tournament in fall 2025.



(clockwise from top) The Soque River is famous for its trout, making it a popular fly fishing destination in the region. ► Former adolescent patient Jace Raymer poses with a catch at this year's event. ► Forget about worms — fly fishers use artificial lures called "flies" made to look like insects. ► Sarah Batts gives a hug to Shaler Alias, thanking him for his support of the tournament.

Planning Committee

Shaler Alias and John Haynes – Fishing and Teams
 Patty Alias and Bradley Sosebee – Concert and After Party
 John Poulos and Furman Wood – BBQ Team

RPM 9/11 5K Brings Buckhead Community Together

When Brookhaven native and Army service member Ryan Means died in 2009, his family wanted to create a way to memorialize his legacy. The annual RPM 9/11 5K was born — honoring not only Ryan's life, but also the life of his best friend, Adam White, who died during the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in New York City.

Sept. 7 was the 13th anniversary of the 5K, and this year's race had over 300 participants and raised \$205,000 for Shepherd Center's SHARE Military Initiative. SHARE is a donor-funded rehabilitation program delivering interdisciplinary care at no cost to veterans, service members, and first responders dealing with traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and mental health concerns.

The race is a family affair, organized by Ryan's brothers Alfie and Michael and sisters-in-law Liz and Angela Means. Liz said community support is a crucial component of pulling the race together.

"We're so grateful for the community support," Liz says. "It's kind of amazing how just a small grassroots 5K has turned into something bigger than that, and it's all due to the community around us."

Before the start of this year's race, keynote speaker Lt. Dan Berschinski shared his experience as a service member. Jon Roxland, Shepherd Center's senior director of philanthropy and



(From top) This year's RPM 9/11 5K had over 300 participants and raised \$205,000 for Shepherd Center's SHARE Military Initiative. ► Alfie Means speaks with Lt. Dan Berschinski.

partnerships, also attended the event and spoke about the importance of donors for the SHARE program.

"The event has galvanized the whole Buckhead community," Roxland says. "It brings the community together to honor Ryan and Adam and to have SHARE be the beneficiary — it's just a special story and a special group of people." *

Shepherd's Men 9/11 Remembrance March Raises Awareness for SHARE

Twenty-six miles. That's how far members of Shepherd's Men marched on Sept. 11 to honor the first responders, service members, and civilians impacted by 9/11, as well as to raise awareness for Shepherd Center's SHARE Military Initiative.

Made up of active and retired service members and civilian volunteers, Shepherd's Men raises awareness and funds for SHARE, a rehabilitation program for veterans, service members, and first responders dealing with traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and mental health concerns.

During the group's 9/11 Remembrance Ruck March, done in partnership with Under Armour, Shepherd's Men had 30 dedicated marchers make the trek from Under Armour headquarters in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee to Nashville. The participants carried weighted rucksacks to raise awareness of the burdens veterans carry after military service.

"The weight carried was specific to a meaningful number that would resonate

with anyone deeply affected by the events of Sept. 11, 2001," says Shepherd's Men co-founder Travis Ellis. "It also symbolized the heavy physical burdens and emotional trauma our warfighters carry each day — a result of countless deployments, an unknown battlefield, in both faraway lands and, all too often, in one's own mind."

The remembrance march concluded at The Charlie Daniels Journey Home Project's annual gala in Nashville, where Shepherd's Men was awarded this year's Giving Heart award. *



► Participants in Shepherd's Men 9/11 Remembrance March trekked 26 miles to raise awareness of burdens veterans carry after military service.

Photos by 524 Creative

Photos by William Twitty

Game On!

Junior Committee Cornhole Tournament Raises Money for Recreation Therapy Program

By Liza Vega-Smart

On Saturday, Oct. 26, Shepherd Center Junior Committee held their second annual Cornhole Tournament at Steady Hand Beer Co. It was a well-attended afternoon, with lots of laughter and friendly competition. Cornhole ATL assisted with the event, helping with check-in and running the tournament.

The tournament boasted over 30 teams — a mix of beginners and more advanced players — and about 50 spectators. In addition to cornhole, attendees enjoyed music, food, drinks, and of course, watching college football together.

As with all Junior Committee events, the funds raised will benefit Shepherd Center's Recreation Therapy Program. This cornerstone program engages patients in adaptive activities and community outings to prepare them for fulfilling, meaningful lives back home.

This event was made possible by Bronze-level sponsors, Dressie Law Firm and M&M Home Exteriors, and Toss sponsors, CWC, Elite Athlete Data Group, Granite, Mallen + Johnson Real Estate Group, Charmaine Palmer, QGenda, and Alana Shepherd.

Interested in getting involved with Junior Committee? Scan the QR code to stay up to date on all their programming. *



(clockwise, from top) Competitors and spectators (and pets!) enjoy the competition. ▶ (From left to right) Junior Committee Executive Board members Daniel Whitaker, Lollie Davis, Virginia Brown, Jennifer Kiser Pierson, Grayson Martin, Charlie Stewart, JJ Brown, and Caroline Hartley pose for a photo at the event.



Aiming High for SHARE



Shepherd's Men Invitational Clay Shoot raises funds for SHARE Military Initiative.

By Erin Kenney

On Nov. 1, 2024, at the Burge Club in Mansfield, Georgia, supporters gathered for the annual Shepherd's Men Invitational Clay Shoot. A SHARE graduate kicked off the event with an exhilarating skydive, leaving trails of red and blue smoke and setting an inspiring tone for the day. Then attendees spent the day enjoying the shoot and fellowship while taking part in an auction benefitting SHARE, with prizes including a handcrafted wood American flag and Atlanta Hawks tickets. After the shoot, Gary Herber delivered a speech sharing his personal journey from the battlefield to finding purpose again through the SHARE Military Initiative.

All in all, the sold-out event raised more than \$130,000 to benefit Shepherd Center's SHARE Military Initiative. This comprehensive rehabilitation program delivers world-class treatment at no cost to veterans, service members, and first responders who have sustained mild to moderate traumatic brain injuries (TBIs). For nearly 10 years, Shepherd's Men has advocated for veterans and service members and raised awareness and funds for SHARE.

The next Shepherd's Men Annual Invitational Clay Shoot is scheduled for Oct. 24, 2025, at Burge. For more information, visit shepherdsmen.com. *



(clockwise from left) Attendees at the sold-out event enjoyed fellowship throughout the day. ▶ Shepherd's Men co-founder Travis Ellis and long-time supporter Mitch Rhoden pose for a photo. ▶ An attendee hits a clay target.

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Sherry Lang

Under Armour's Project Rock Partners with Shepherd's Men

By Erin Kenney

Shepherd's Men, a group founded by Travis Ellis and Troy Campbell and comprised of active or retired service members and civilian volunteers, recently announced an exciting partnership to raise funds and awareness for Shepherd Center's SHARE Military Initiative.

To recognize Veterans Day, Under Armour's Project Rock, led by icon Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, chose Shepherd's Men to be the beneficiary of funds raised by their Veterans Day Collection, a limited-edition apparel line honoring military service members and veterans.

As part of the collaboration, Project Rock produced a video and social media campaign featuring Shepherd staff members, SHARE clients, and Shepherd's Men members celebrating the individualized care offered to military



Photo by William Twitty

veterans, service members, and first responders through SHARE, as well as the fundraising and awareness work efforts of Shepherd's Men.

"It's next level care, powered by connection, community, and commitment," Johnson says in a promotional video for the collaboration. "It's the work of SHARE, championed by Shepherd's Men, and Project Rock and Under Armour are proud to support their mission."

You can watch the full video, narrated by "The Rock," at shepherdsmen.com/transforming-veteran-lives. *

(left) In conjunction with the Project Rock partnership, Shepherd's Men gathered at Under Armour headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland, to conduct a 22-hour long series of strength exercises to raise awareness for SHARE. They arrived at the headquarters at 5:30 a.m. on Nov. 11 to begin their two-day challenge. ▶ (right) Shepherd's Men members celebrate on the Under Armour pier on Chesapeake Bay after their strength training challenge on Nov. 12.

Photos provided by Shepherd's Men

Deceased friends of Shepherd Center are listed first in bold print followed by the names of those making gifts in their memory. This list reflects gifts made to Shepherd Center between **July 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024.**



This fall, Shepherd Center hosted an adaptive scuba diving trip to Bonaire. To learn more about opportunities through our Recreation Therapy Program, visit shepherd.org/rec-therapy.

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For National Case Management Week, we were lucky to get a photo of all our case managers together. Thank you, case managers, for all you do!



In October, the Atlanta Falcons' Grady Jarrett made a special visit to Shepherd, stopping by to meet some of the amazing patients in our Adolescent Rehabilitation Program.

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Ms. Sharon Franklin
- Richard M. (Dick) Stormont**
Mr. and Mrs. Galen L. Oelkers
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Mr. and Mrs. William T. Pickren
- Glen Thor**
Ms. Laura Barangan
Mr. and Mrs. Lee Radford
Ms. Pamela J. Reddick
- Betty Tillery**
Mr. and Mrs. Jeff G. Griffin
- Sandra "Sandy" Unruh**
Ms. Norma J. Ellis
- David M. Wheeler**
Ms. Sally Wheeler
- Raymond "Jerry" White**
Ms. Julie H. Shepherd and
Mr. Andrew Louw
- Jay Woodruff Memorial**
Mr. and Mrs. Clint P. Owens
- Woody Woodside**
The Honorable and Mrs. Sam A. Nunn
- Stephen Yockey**
Shepherd Center Board of Directors
- Ioannis Zarkos**
Ms. Anastasia Zarkou

Honorariums

Honorees are listed first in bold print followed by the names of those making gifts in their honor. This list reflects gifts made to Shepherd Center between **July 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024.**



In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, staff got creative by coming up with ways for patients to celebrate, like working on their dexterity and hand-eye coordination by painting maracas, a staple in Hispanic and Latin music.

- Ellen Allen's Birthday**
Mr. Joel R. Feldstein
- Dr. Dave Apple's Birthday**
Mr. and Mrs. Dell B. Sikes
- Cyndae Arrendale's Birthday**
Mr. and Mrs. Steve A. Williams
- Braxton Bachand**
Mr. Bill Cross
- Sarah Batts**
Mr. and Mrs. Haygood P. Seawell, Sr.
- Jason M. Beard**
Ms. Wanda P. Beard
- Shana Brandon**
Ms. Amber Crucillo
- Nancy Brock**
Ms. Susanne E. Shepherd
- Jessica K. Burrell**
Mr. and Mrs. Steven M. Burrell
- Chase Clark**
Mr. Phil Chase
Ms. Kelli Clark
- Barbara Cochran's Birthday**
Mr. and Mrs. Steven J. Labovitz
- Toni and Dr. Marty Conry**
Ms. Susanne E. Shepherd
- Mason Cullars**
Mr. and Mrs. Albert Kingman
- James Curtis' Volunteer Work**
Mr. and Mrs. Dell B. Sikes
- Virginia Ruth Davis**
Anonymous
- David Dick**
Ms. Ella T. Dick
- Rebecca Doty**
Mr. Steven E. Derby
Mr. and Mrs. Bob Farkas
Mr. Jeffrey Freiser
Ms. Doreen Gagnon
Mr. Nick Nyhart
Kalman Rubinson
Anh Thu Vu
- Gale Eckstein's Retirement**
Mr. and Mrs. Dell B. Sikes
- David Ewing**
Mr. Timothy Ewing
- Kacey Floyd**
Mr. and Mrs. Travis N. Fulk
- Priscilla Glass' Birthday**
Ms. Nell W. Bradbury
- Makenzie Godwin's 12th Birthday**
Mr. and Mrs. Milton Godwin, Jr.
- Colin Goracke and his Caregivers**
Mr. and Mrs. John M. Altman
- Scott Gordon, Sr.**
Mr. and Mrs. Scott Gordon
- Maureen Greco's Birthday**
Ms. Frances Deal
- Lori S. Hagy**
Mr. and Mrs. Edwin R. Hagy,
USMC (Retired)
- Anne Hamilton**
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Alexander
Mr. Mark Horton
Ms. Beverly Simpson
- Karyn Harris**
Mr. Ralph Stephens
- Connie Hart**
Mr. and Mrs. Luther Kelley
- Shaneika Hillman**
Ms. Bonnie Hillman
- Keith and Kathy Holland**
Ms. Margaret Kilapatrick
- Nicolas Horne**
Mr. Dameon Horne
- Jane Humann's Birthday**
Ms. Nell W. Bradbury
- Theresa Hutchinson**
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Donovan
Mr. Daniel Doty
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Duane
Ms. Cathy Hurwit
Ms. Shelly Hutchinson
Ms. Ellen M. Kelly
- Terri Hyon**
Ms. Susanne E. Shepherd
- Joel and Pat Irvan**
Mr. and Mrs. Eddie W. Hoyal
- Nolen Jarl**
Ms. Amy O'Connell
- Jarrett Jenkins**
Ms. Alonda Massey
Mr. Robbie Wesley Jones
- Mike Jones**
Mr. and Mrs. James H. Shepherd III
- Christopher Kelly**
Mr. Eugene B. Kelly and Ms. Barbara T. West
- Jena N. Kelly**
The Robert and Nancy Kelly Fund
- Jake Kennedy and so many others**
Mr. Alejandro Esparza and
Ms. Joanne Esparza
- Earl Klugh**
Ms. Kathryn Mardo
- Dr. Don Leslie**
Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Klein
Ms. Ruthie T. Watts



For Halloween, Harper Owens, Brooklynn Chambers, and Hannah Lindsay, all patients in our Adolescent Rehabilitation Program, took on a viral TikTok baking trend with a spooky twist.

Barry and Debbie Liff

Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. Murray Berkowitz
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Christie
Ms. Georgette Dorsky
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Groedel
Mr. Peter Johnson and Ms. Stephanie Tolleson
Mr. Irwin Krenzler
Ms. Suzanne Liff
Ms. Ellen Murphy
Ms. Gail Price
Mr. and Mrs. David Rosenberg
Mr. Alan Rosskamm
Ms. Niki Schaefer
Ms. Anita Siegal
Mr. Ron Sugar
Mr. and Mrs. Roger Synenberg
Mr. Jeffrey Weiner

Rebecca Marmer

Ms. Mara Lavitt

Grayson Martin's Birthday

Raleigh Cassada

Kathy and Bruce Mattox

Give in Honor of:
Craig Andrews and CRU Nursing Staff
Dr. and Mrs. David Apple
Lance Baden, Rolando Alexander and Pharmacy Techs
Dr. Angela Beninga & Staff
Kakia Bennett
Danelle Bone and Pain Clinic Staff

Susan Bowen
Chad Caldwell
Katherine Creek
Dr. Payal Fadia and Staff
Dr. and Mrs. Bruce Green
Marsha Hanson
Clare Hartigan and Family
Lorie Hutcheson
Sheila Jackson and Specialty Clinics Staff
Ifeya Johnson and Rehab Medicine Clinic Staff
Dr. Jacque Jones
Kathie Kurtz
Tabatha Lamadieu and Call Center Staff
Dr. and Mrs. Donald Leslie
Dr. Dallin Lindahl, Specialty Wound Nurses, Inpatient WOCN Nurses and Day Program Nurses
Carlton McGhee & Staff
Tawana Mitchell and MS Staff
Sarah Morrison
MS Infusion Team: Wanda Bagley, Sandra Gimblet and Lisa Huthmacher
Dr. Herndon Murray
Brian Park
Dr. Alan Peljovich
Alex Seblatnigg
Alana Shepherd
Jamie Shepherd & Family
Julie Shepherd
Sherry Turner
Dr. Michael Yochelson

William "Will" Meadows

Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. Meadows

Alfie Means

Mr. and Mrs. James E. Jowers, Jr.

Liz and Alfie Means

Mr. and Mrs. Keith Wood

Mary Jo Means

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry A. Shaifer

Chuck Melito

Mr. Jerry Eumont

Linda Miller

Mr. Timothy Miller

Jamal Mitchell

Mr. and Mrs. Steven J. Labovitz

Col. J. Harry Mobley, USA Retired

Roderick Seward, Flossie Radcliffe and Helen M. Galloway Foundation

Jimmy and Jaimie Moore

Mr. Michael A. Caplan

Marsha Moorer's Birthday

Ms. Nell W. Bradbury

Sarah Morrison

Ms. Angela Blank
Dr. and Mrs. Nevin Kreisler
Ms. Sheryl Sellaway

Sarah Morrison's Retirement

Mr. and Mrs. J. Hays Mershon
Mr. and Mrs. James H. Shepherd III
Mr. and Mrs. Dell B. Sikes

Justice Munn

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Munn

Ryan Narramore

Anonymous

Don Nelson

Kendall Nelson

Shayna Nuzzo

Bengu Sezer

Jessica Peoples' Birthday

Ms. Rosalind Peoples

Carolyn Pittman

Mr. Louie A. Pittman, Jr.

Craig Powell's Birthday

Mrs. Janet Powell

John Quinn

Ms. Nancy Schuessler
Mr. Christopher Yeakel

Allison Robinson

Mr. Buff Brown

Alana S. Shepherd

Mr. and Mrs. Larry M. Cowman
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas F. Reid
Mrs. Mary Varner

Alana Shepherd's Birthday

Mr. and Mrs. Dell B. Sikes

Jamie Shepherd

Mr. and Mrs. Paul M. Hawkins, Jr.

Jamie Shepherd's Promotion to CEO

Mr. and Mrs. Dell B. Sikes

Julie Shepherd

Ms. Katherine Jacques

The Doctors, Nurses, Clinicians and Therapists at Shepherd

Mr. and Mrs. Bertram L. Levy

David Siegel's Birthday

Mr. and Mrs. Steven J. Labovitz

Ashlyn Smith

Ms. Christy Smith

Pierre St. Brice

Ms. Bonnie Carten

Robert Suter

Ms. Kathleen Suter

Dr. Ben Thrower

Ms. Lisa King

Steve Timmons

Mr. Lucas Harper

Rocco Tucker

Ms. Liza Adkison
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Ms. Faith Sutter
Ms. Tina Verderosa
Mr. and Mrs. Stafford Williams

Jordan Weise

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph B. Dicarolo

John Withers IV

Mr. and Mrs. John B. Withers III

Price and Tammy Woodward

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Joe Wrightsman

Kinnon Lindsey

Mak Yost

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Shepherd Center Needs Your Feedback!

We would like your feedback on your experience with Shepherd Center. Please scan the QR code with the camera on your phone to participate in a quick survey. Thank you!

For a paper survey, contact Meena Iyer, MSIE, LSSBB, CPHQ, Manager Quality and Outcomes, at meena.iyer@shepherd.org or 404-367-1396.





Shepherd Center

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ShepherdCares launches Sarah Morrison Staff Support Fund

Every September, Shepherd Center employees take part in the hospital's employee giving campaign, ShepherdCares. This year's "Toy Story"-inspired campaign, "You've Got a Friend in Me," launched the Sarah Morrison Staff Support Fund. Named for Shepherd's recently retired chief executive officer, Sarah Morrison, PT, MBA, MHA, the fund will provide emergency financial support for employees navigating unexpected crises, like flooding or house fires.

"Recognizing the exceptional care our teams provide to patients and families during their most challenging moments, we aim to extend similar support to our colleagues in times of need," Morrison said at the start of the campaign.

Led by Alex Seblatnigg, CAVS, CPXP, the director of volunteer services and internal engagement, this year's campaign raised \$230,580, well over the \$175,000 goal. 100% of this year's campaign proceeds will go to the staff support fund, and in future campaigns, 50% of donations will go to the fund.

"I'm always impressed — but never surprised — by the generosity of our employees when it comes to ShepherdCares," Seblatnigg says. "We see participation from every part of the hospital, and it is a great example of the special culture that runs through everything we do."

