



# University Health Network

## VOLUNTEER RESOURCES

2017-18 ANNUAL REPORT



Photo by Calvin Heinrichs



Volunteers are everywhere at UHN - emergency departments, inpatient units and ambulatory clinics, information desks and administrative areas, research, rehab, and involved in many corporate and hospital site projects and initiatives.

The ongoing development and expansion of new roles and programs in UHN departments, along with partnerships with schools and other external organizations, has enabled Volunteer Resources to impact the UHN community in a multitude of new ways again this year. The effective integration, engagement, and mentorship of volunteers by placement supervisors plays a critical role in the success of these volunteer opportunities. All volunteers at UHN want to learn, be valued, recognized, and most importantly, make a meaningful contribution to the success of UHN.

During 2017-2018, the various collaborations between Volunteer Resources and the UHN community enabled volunteers to play instrumental roles in supporting UHN's focus on safety. Throughout the year volunteers could be found working with the Occupational Health and Safety teams, the Infection Prevention and Control teams, clinical and project teams, and the Caring Safely team in support of living "Caring Safely" and eliminating preventable harm to patients and in the workplace.

It is our hope that every unit and department will continue to search for ways to effectively integrate and meaningfully engage volunteers, that clinical and non-clinical multi-disciplinary teams will continue to work with Volunteer Resources to identify and create volunteer roles within their areas which will benefit patients and their families, align with UHN's purpose, values and principles, and support UHN's place as a world-leading academic health sciences centre.

***We hope you enjoy reading more about some of our volunteers who are highlighted in this annual report.***

**Debbie Talbot,**  
Manager  
Toronto Rehabilitation Institute  
Princess Margaret Cancer Centre

**Ivetka Vasil,**  
Manager  
Toronto General Hospital  
Toronto Western Hospital

**Roger Stevens,**  
Manager  
Talent Acquisition &  
Volunteer Resources



**VOLUNTEER**  
VAL



Toronto General Hospital  
Toronto Western Hospital  
Princess Margaret Hospital

VALENTINA PATRICK  
VALENTINA PATRICK

# 30 Plus Years of Volunteer Service... and still going strong!

**FROM 500 SHERBOURNE STREET TO 610 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN GIVING THEIR TIME TO PRINCESS MARGARET ALL OF THOSE YEARS. SOME HAVE BEEN PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR OVER 30 YEARS.**

Val Zatskoy, Volunteer Extraordinaire and a Bell Canada retiree, has donated over 42 years of her time. Val recalled her decision to become a volunteer in 1976 and during the interview process was told the commitment was 2 years. At that time Val thought that this was a very long commitment and now laughs stating "How time flies when you truly enjoy what you do for the patients, their families and the staff." She volunteered at the Gift Shop at Princess Margaret Lodge for 3 hours a week and transitioned into the hospital in two of our outpatient clinics assisting the patients and staff.

Here are some of their responses when we met with our long service volunteers and asked them - "What is your most memorable moment from volunteering with us?"

- "Getting a hug from a patient who was polite but not too interactive with me"
- "Twice I received notes of appreciation from spouses of deceased patients. That was very special to me"

Val Zatskoy fond memories include being on a live show of Breakfast Television to promote volunteering; being an active member of the Volunteer Advisory Committee and Chair; and having fun as Captain of the CIBC RUN FOR THE CURE. Some thoughts from Val after all those years of volunteering?

- "the most important thing I have learned from this experience has been to take the time to listen carefully to both the patients and their families."
- "People are nervous, uptight, stressed when they come to the clinic. You have to allay their fears as much as you can by being polite supportive, friendly, empathetic."
- "Not to judge people on your first encounter with them. Patients and/or those with them sometimes are very difficult when you first meet them (understandable as they are ill and worried), but after seeing them in the clinic multiple times a very positive relationship develops."
- "Getting to know and work successfully with staff and other volunteers from different walks of life, ages and experiences."
- "It's a two way street – you give your best to the patients and in return you earn their trust and friendship along the way."
- "Volunteers have different life experiences and skills, we are there to help the staff with appropriate task, which in turn is to help the patients to realize that the staff will do everything they can to educate, relieve their fears and treat them in their journey of disease."
- "Volunteers want to be team members, to feel very welcome and be an important member of the clinic group. When treated accordingly, Volunteers will continue to volunteer as long as possible."

# “The FUN People”

## TRI, E.W. Bickle Centre Wellness Partners



124 Wellness  
Volunteers gave  
1541 hours to the  
programs in 2017

The Wellness Partners at Toronto Rehab’s E.W. Bickle Centre provide recreational rehabilitation for all patients onsite – a unique undertaking for staff at UHN. Their role includes scheduling and conducting engaging sessions for the patients such as Bingo, Pet Therapy, community outings, special events and much more. Based on a patient’s abilities, the Wellness program can also be a means of socialization. The Wellness Partners jokingly called themselves “The Fun People” but most who see them at work would definitely agree that the activities they plan provide more than just fun for both the patients and the volunteers involved.

Charissa Chow, Anna Leung and Matthew Van der Horden supervise a number of volunteers weekly for various patient activities. When asked what the Wellness Partners appreciate most about their volunteers, they responded “the support of the volunteers is essential for their programs to run. The volunteers are seen as a fresh face for the patients to interact with weekly and the volunteers gain a sense of responsibility for the patients they interact with.” Volunteers assist in escorting patients to weekly sessions and help them participate in the activities. This is a very interactive opportunity for volunteers to grow & develop while spending time with patients. For patients

whose mother tongue is not English sometimes there are volunteers who can speak the same language, which opens up a whole new range of communication for a patient and can instantly change their comfort level when engaging in the Wellness programs.

The Wellness Partners also expressed appreciation for the Pet Therapy volunteers. They find that patient interaction changes when a pet enters the room. Some of the patients have a love for animals or they miss their pet - and having a furry friend visit can make their day.

Advice from the Wellness Partners to the rest of UHN: “Don’t overlook the value of a volunteer.” The Wellness Partners have learned that utilizing volunteers to their fullest shows the most significant benefit of volunteers - extra support, socialization for patients & alleviation of stress. “Patients at Bickle can have very complex needs, but they’re still people, they have personalities and want to enjoy the company of others. Volunteers create those opportunities for patients daily.”

*Left to right: Anna Leung, Matthew Van der Horden and Charissa Chow*



Photo by Calvin Heinrichs

## Toronto General Hospital's Surgical Waiting Room

**THE DAY OF SURGERY IS AN ANXIOUS TIME AND WAITING CAN CREATE A RANGE OF EMOTIONS FOR THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF A PERSON HAVING SURGERY AT TORONTO GENERAL HOSPITAL. THE SURGICAL WAITING ROOM (SWR) VOLUNTEERS ARE THERE TO HELP. HAVING AN INFORMED AND COMPASSIONATE PERSON AVAILABLE DURING THIS TIME MAKES A DIFFICULT DAY MUCH MORE MANAGEABLE.**

What families value and appreciate most is receiving information updates on the progress of the surgery. Our Surgical Waiting Room volunteers are selectively placed and trained to be well informed and resourceful. These volunteers vary in age and experience but all share a compassion and commitment to providing this support.

On any given day, sixteen surgeries are scheduled with more often added. This requires accurate and timely communication with surgeons, Operating Room nurses, and the nursing team in the Post Anesthetic Care Unit (PACU), Intensive Care Units (ICU), Inpatient Units, and

many other areas. Volunteers understand the importance of being patient, calm and attentive so that families are kept updated to feel more at ease while waiting.

SWR volunteers are able to provide many additional services that make our hospital friendlier and more comfortable. When a patient is in recovery, SWR volunteers act as an escort for a family to have a post-surgical visit in PACU. Charging phones, providing Kleenex, lending pillows and blankets, offering information about services in and out of the hospital can all be part of how volunteers help the families' experience.



**Researchers  
by day...  
Volunteers  
by night!**

**MONDAYS ARE ALWAYS A SPECIAL DAY AT WORK FOR KREMBIL NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCHERS SAMUEL TSAI, AHMED ELSEHEMY, AND BEATRICE BALLARIN. ALTHOUGH A TYPICAL WORKDAY STARTS WITH AN EARLY MORNING, IN THE EVENING THEY BECOME PATIENT VISITORS AS THEY MAKE THEIR ROUNDS ACROSS THE HOSPITAL'S INPATIENT UNITS AT TORONTO WESTERN HOSPITAL.**

The group's inception started when Samuel decided to apply for volunteering at TWH in May 2017. The Research Technician's friendly demeanor made him a natural fit to become a Patient Visitor.

By day, Samuel spends his time devoted to researching photoreceptor transplants in hopes of restoring vision in patients with AMD (Age-Related Macular Degeneration) and RP (retinitis pigmentosa).

"We do neuroscience research so I wanted to get some hands-on experience working with the patients who would benefit from my research," said Samuel. "Patient-interaction provides a lot of insight and gives perspective to the values of research and why we do what we do in healthcare."

A few months later, Ahmed heard about his colleague's new role and decided to apply to volunteer as well. "I wanted to get a personal aspect of the healthcare system," said Ahmed, a PhD student whose research focuses on the novel therapeutics for the treatment of glioblastomas. "I was also interested in being part of different aspects of patient-centered care."

Shortly afterwards, Beatrice approached TWH Volunteer Resources for additional opportunities. She initially joined TWH as a Research Volunteer in September 2014 before becoming a Graduate Student at Krembil. Beatrice was delighted when she heard that Sam and Ahmed were also volunteering as Patient Visitors and decided to join.

"I am very social so I really enjoy talking with patients and their families," said Beatrice, another PhD student whose research focuses on understanding the mechanisms of stroke recovery.

Samuel and Ahmed both agreed that Patient Visiting can be challenging, but can be overcome with a positive approach and preparation.

"You need to be aware of what the patients need and don't need. You can definitely identify the patients who enjoy the visits and which patients prefer to be left alone," said Samuel. "It's not a one-size-fits-all approach; you need to assess the social cues and personalities when meeting each patient."

"You need empathy and patience. In order to make them feel comfortable, you need to be able to put yourselves in their position when they are sharing their personal stories with you," added Ahmed. "It helps personalize the experience with the volunteer."

The group's ongoing journey as volunteers has shed new light on how they perceive and approach patients at UHN beyond the laboratory setting. The trio has acquired a new outlook on the patients whom they hope will ultimately benefit from their research one day.

"Patient interaction provides a lot of insight and gives perspective to the values of research and why we do what we do in healthcare," said Samuel.

Beatrice encourages other hospital researchers to give volunteering a try even if they lack experience.

"Be strong even if at times you don't think you have achieved anything," she said. "Keeping company with patients can mean a lot to them."

"You have to prioritize it. If it's important to you, then you'll make time for it," said Samuel. "So I always try my best to fulfill my volunteer commitments."



# Toronto Western Hospital ENGAGE Program Volunteer – Helena Zhang

Helena Zhang has compiled numerous accolades as student, but her impact as a volunteer at Toronto Western Hospital is immeasurable to the patients and staff whom she interacts with.

Since 2016, Helena has been visiting patients on a weekly basis as a member of the ENGAGE program. The gifted grade 12 student was initially looking forward to providing friendly visits to patients, but the idea of drawing with them was unexpected until she started.

“The ENGAGE program has shown me the power of creativity and art as a therapy and as an outlet for emotions whenever I colour, draw, and write cards for patients.” says Helena. “It was much easier to connect with the patients after I was able to incorporate art into the visiting.”

“Conversations can’t always solve problems, but art has a therapeutic effect and it gave me more purpose,” she adds.

She recalls a memorable patient whom she formed a special connection with. This patient was often aggravated due to the social isolation during her stay at TWH, but Helena’s visits made a notable difference.

“The nurses said she was difficult to communicate with. She was very lonely and I knew it was difficult to be confined in hospital walls for a very long time,” says Helena. “She was an artist herself and I definitely bonded with her through art.”



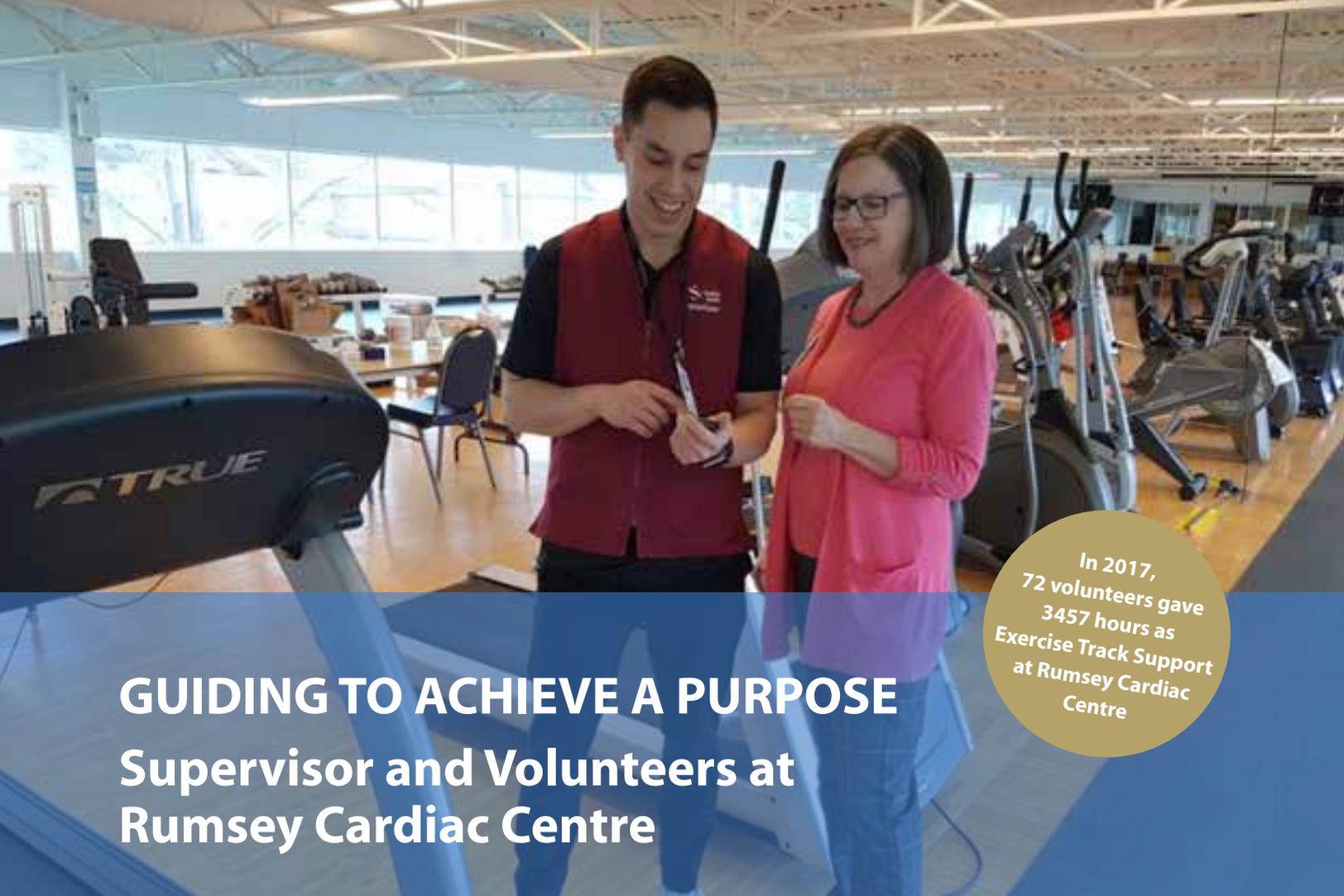
Helena was able to break through the communication barriers, which reinforced her commitment as a volunteer. Despite other commitments, Helena took great strides to visit this patient on a regular basis.

“I made sure to visit her every week even if there was a snowstorm or if I had school work because I wanted her to know she would not be alone. For Christmas, I got her a teddy bear so she would always have company and she named it after her two sons,” says Helena.

Her connection with this patient taught Helena many lessons that are aligned with UHN’s Purpose, Values, and Principles.

## VOLUNTEER POPULATION





# GUIDING TO ACHIEVE A PURPOSE

## Supervisor and Volunteers at Rumsey Cardiac Centre

In 2017,  
72 volunteers gave  
3457 hours as  
Exercise Track Support  
at Rumsey Cardiac  
Centre

**TORONTO REHAB – RUMSEY CARDIAC CENTRE (RCC) IS WELL KNOWN FOR ITS CARDIOVASCULAR PREVENTION AND REHABILITATION PROGRAM. CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE IS THE NUMBER ONE CAUSE OF DEATH IN CANADA. SUCH A PROGRAM AIDS IN MINIMIZING THE RISK OF DYING FROM HEART ATTACK OR STROKE BY 50%; AND ALLOWS PATIENTS TO MANAGE THEIR HEALTH AND IMPROVE THEIR WELLBEING.**

To make this program a success, Yvonne Lute Dover (Cardiac Rehab Supervisor and Case Manager for Cardiac Patients), ensures that her volunteers are thoroughly trained and receive sufficient assistance from her Team Leaders in order to effectively assist patients. These volunteers are trained on how to: operate the stopwatch (as seen in the photo attached), monitor participant's heart rate, pacing equipment on track, and resistance training, just to name a few. This type of training and assistance allows the volunteers to be fully equipped and feel confident to take on their volunteer role within the program.

Yvonne comments that volunteers play an important role in this program, because having them present allows patients to have one-on-one interaction as opposed to one staff managing a group of patients. Volunteers walk with patients around a 200m track, both indoor and

outdoor. While walking, they listen to the patients' stories, alert staff of patients' concerns/issues and monitor their heart rate and pace. Patients look forward to working with their volunteers each visit, interacting and socializing, and having fun while they prevent cardiac issues in the future and improve their overall health and wellbeing.

Many of the volunteers who assist at Rumsey Cardiac Centre were once participants in the program themselves. Once they have graduated and spent some time acquainting themselves with life after a cardiac episode, they find they want to give back to the program. If you like spending time with people, engaging in conversations, helping people with improved health and wellbeing, perhaps Rumsey Cardiac Centre is the place for you!

*From left to right: James McCullough, Yvonne Lute Dover*



## “THE ELEVATOR MAN”

### George Roelofson, Princess Margaret Volunteer

George Roelofson who has been volunteering at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre for over 5 years, started as a Healing Beyond the Body (HBB) volunteer, in the Genitourinary (GU) clinic and then moved into his current role as a Navigator. Navigators play a critical role in reducing the anxiety level of patients, caregivers and visitors by assisting with way-finding, especially while Princess Margaret Cancer Centre is undergoing a major renovation/redevelopment project.

George has been especially helpful and supportive to patients, visitors and staff by getting their attention and informing them which elevators are functioning and in what direction they are going. This keeps everyone moving to ensure the main elevator lobby is working in the most efficient way. When complimented on his hard work in the lobby, George responded by stating, “It didn’t take long for me to realize that the main floor elevator lobby needed some informed organizing. My enjoyment comes from how appreciative visitors are when I “pushed” them towards their destination. There is

usually an exchange of good humour.” It is no coincidence that George has a knack for elevator service as his family business when he was growing up, was ..... you guessed it ..... elevators! George’s family manufactured and installed passenger & freight elevators and he worked in the industry after attending university.

George thanks Princess Margaret for his volunteering opportunities and says that “UHN – Princess Margaret has done a terrific job of informing staff about the place of the volunteer organization in the big picture of the total operation. I feel very well treated by professional, as well as regular staff.”

When asked about his favourite memories as a volunteer, George shared that “I enjoyed how a simple conversation could move the patient away from focusing on their cancer diagnosis. That brought a lot of smiles.” He added, “Volunteering is a reminder of the great deal of pleasure one can receive by helping others.”

# FACES OF THE FUTURE

## Human Resources Interns



University Health Network (UHN) has been well known as an educational health care organization for many years. Besides providing clinical and medical learning opportunities to students, UHN also provides experiential learning opportunities to non-clinical students through Volunteer Resources.

One area of non-clinical experiential learning worth highlighting is the Human Resources (HR) Intern Program that has been running for over 10 years. Volunteer Resources, in collaboration with the Talent Acquisition team in Human Resources, have reached out to colleges and universities that teach Human Resources on a Co-operative learning basis. UHN posts unpaid HR internship opportunities for Human Resources students in a number of different areas within Human Resources. In the early days of the HR Intern Program, UHN provided opportunities to five or six HR interns. Over the years, the Program has continued to expand, providing HR internship opportunities to 15-20 students each term.

Even though these internships are unpaid, we receive many applications each term. Through our intake and interview process, we select only the best candidates. We always ask candidates why they have applied for an unpaid HR internship at UHN when they could have pursued a paid one elsewhere. Their answer is always the same - because it is UHN. Many students hear from previous HR Interns about the great learning opportunities they had in Human Resources at UHN. Placement supervisors spend time training, coaching and teaching these students about their specific area of Human Resources. The HR interns are also welcomed and treated as part of the HR team. The number of former HR interns who now work at UHN, or have found successful roles in Human Resources elsewhere, is large and growing. It would be safe to say that this HR Intern Program has not only been a huge success for UHN and human resources students, but it has made an important impact on the world outside of UHN.

## FEEDBACK BY VOLUNTEERS



188,466

TOTAL NUMBER OF PATIENTS ASSISTED



143,504

FAMILY MEMBERS/  
VISITORS ASSISTED

(increase of 46% from previous year)



69,328

NAVIGATORS HELPED  
FIND THE WAY

(30% increase from previous year)



84,556

NUTRITION TRAYS  
AUDITED



355

HOURS SPENT 1:1 DURING  
PEER MENTORING



# CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

## Opening Our Doors, Building a Community

**IN 2017, UHN VOLUNTEER RESOURCES TAPPED IN TO AN ALREADY EXTENSIVE MARKET IN TORONTO – CORPORATE VOLUNTEERS. MANY NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE MANY GREAT CORPORATIONS WHO ARE ENGAGING THEIR EMPLOYEES BY ENCOURAGING THEM TO GIVE BACK TO THEIR COMMUNITY. WHY, YOU MIGHT BE WONDERING?**

Corporate volunteering programs drive employee engagement. Companies that promote active volunteering programs benefit from higher morale, team building, and greater employee satisfaction. As a result, a better productive and profitable organization.

Corporate volunteering also allows the new generation of employees, the Millennials, in an organization the opportunity to “make the world a better place” – something this generation of employees yearns to do. Lastly, corporate volunteering will have an impact on the organization’s visibility in the community.

UHN Volunteer Resources came up with a great plan to get these companies involved by aiming to get them out of their comfort zone and really use their hands to make something from the heart.

That’s when the Cardiac Pillows for Cardiac Patients and Emergency Kits for ER projects evolved!

For years, we had a very dedicated volunteer who made pillows for the recovering cardiac patients in the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre. These pillows help the patient by easing the pain when they return to their day-to-day activities such as wearing a seat belt or dressing. Cardiac pillows cushion the incision area and allow for a more comfortable recovery.

“My mother received one of these pillows after her surgery here at TGH many years ago. She is not with us anymore but we still have that pillow.” –Dr. Charlie Chan

We also host Emergency Kits for ER events where employees help put together a care package that might

include necessities such as toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, Kleenex, socks, etc. These kits are then delivered to the Emergency rooms at TGH and TWH where they are given out to patients in need. To date, we have hosted events for TD Wealth Management, BenchSci, and Cadillac Fairview.

In early 2018, we teamed up with TGH Wellness to offer sessions to in-house employee groups who wish to participate in the Refresh 2.0 program, where one of the 8 weeks, we come and help our own employees give back to our patients. The Medical Oncology and Hematology department was the first team we hosted.

*“Volunteering is no longer little old ladies sewing up pillows. UHN volunteers are primarily post-secondary students with a vast set of skills that we place in roles across UHN that will help us live our primary value, the needs of the patient comes first. But there is still a need for some hands-on work. The pillow program brings volunteering back to its roots when Auxiliary volunteers would make crafts to comfort patients. It is still a necessary need and we hope that this program aids in helping that need.”*

*“What a wonderful way to start the weekend! This morning was such a great experience; it will definitely not be the last time I volunteer at University Health Network!” - Danitza Nunez, Employee Experience, TD Wealth Management*



# “B-I-N-G-O”

## Patient Engagement through Games

Almost 20 years ago, the Tuesday Social program was started at Toronto Rehab’s University Centre (TRI UC) by the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute Volunteer Association (TRIVA). Players (patients, their family members/caregivers and volunteers guiding patients) are calling out “BINGO!”, and you will also hear Sean Purdy, a wonderful volunteer announcing the numbers from the Bingo machine.

Sean’s parents are both UHN employees so he knew from them what a great place UHN is. When Sean was first interviewed in 2013, he was a shy and reserved young man. Now almost four years later Sean’s comfort level with patients has increased and he is helping to ensure it is a fun and engaging evening for the patients.

Sean takes a unique spin on number calling....no monotone boring Bingo event here at TRI UC!

- “Our favourite ball, under the B...B4!” In turn, all of the other players shout out, “Not after!”
- “I 24....all day long!”
- “O74....our broken ball, held together with wishes and dreams.”
- “Under the B, B12....Dr. Bernstein’s secret.”

Sean loves the fact that he is interacting with people from all walks of life. He also feels that this experience is helping to further his own personal and career goals of a career in the nutrition department of a long-term care facility.

Volunteer Resources would like to recognize all of our Tuesday Social volunteers, past and present, for providing an evening of fun to our patients and their caregivers. While engaging in this social activity, you bring smiles to all of their faces and create a positive patient experience.

## TOP 4 AREAS



76,618 hours

OUTPATIENT SUPPORT



43,841 hours

INPATIENT SUPPORT



68,716 hours

RESEARCH



55,971 hours

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

## Leading by Example!



**THE UHN VOLUNTEER RESOURCES TEAM DECIDED THAT THIS YEAR, THEY WERE GOING TO LEAD BY EXAMPLE AND VOLUNTEER AS A DEPARTMENT FOR A GREAT CAUSE.**

On a bright, sunny day in June, the team met at the Project Sunshine Canada headquarters for a half day of assembling Comfort Care Kits, Arts & Crafts Kits, and sewing Surgical Dolls (Surgi Dolls).

Surgi Dolls help children prepare for surgery and other medical procedures. Child Life Specialists or healthcare professionals may demonstrate where an incision will be made or what body parts will be treated, by drawing or using play medical tools on the Surgi Doll. The exterior of these dolls are left blank so that each child can color, decorate, and make the doll his or her own.

The team assembled over 480 Comfort Care kits, cut, stuffed and stitched 8 Surgi dolls, and put together 200 Arts & Crafts kits!



# National Volunteer Week 2017

Volunteers are an important part of the puzzle!

**EVERY APRIL, WE CELEBRATE THE OVER 3,000 VOLUNTEERS THAT COME THROUGH OUR DOORS EACH YEAR. POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS, ADULTS, SENIORS AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS COMPILE THE LIST OF THE MANY TYPES OF VOLUNTEERS WE HAVE ACROSS OUR ORGANIZATION.**

National Volunteer Week gives us an opportunity to shine the light on these wonderful people who generously donate their time, skills, and energy to make our patient experience the best it can possibly be. This year's theme focused on the importance of volunteers as being a part of a bigger puzzle.

In 2017 Volunteer Resources hosted our very first Volunteer Trivia Night, where teams of volunteers competed to win the coveted trophy! We also hosted daytime display tables at each site with games, facts, and prizes.

We highlighted the important contributions our volunteers make, the programs they are in, and also had fun with staff spinning our wheel and taking photo booth style pictures. We also held two important workshops for our volunteers - Resume Writing and Interview Skills and a seminar on Health Equity. Volunteers also got the chance to see real research in action during an iDapt Tour at Toronto Rehab.

In 2017, volunteers assisted in more than 150 clinics and departments, donated 270,345 hours of service to the UHN community, and helped Volunteer Resources live our Purpose, Values, and Principles of teamwork, compassion, and integrity. We thank them for that!



# They're Called Man's Best Friend for a Reason!

## PET THERAPY AT UHN

Have you seen these furry friends hanging around patient units at UHN?

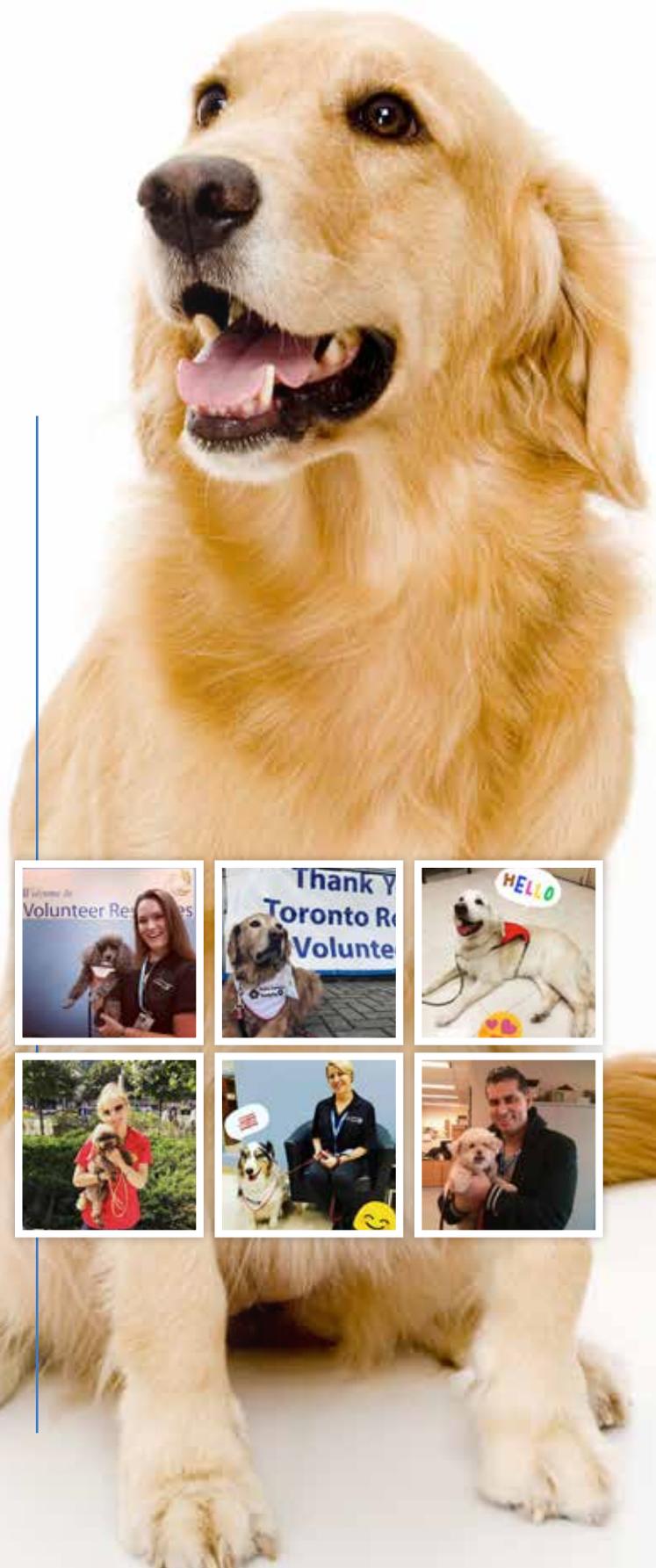
They are our Pet Therapy volunteer teams and their main duty is to bring a smile (and a cuddle!) to the many inpatients in our hospitals.

Each team consists of a trained pet therapy dog and their handler, who visit and provide relief and distraction for patients awaiting treatments. The therapy dog program provides an opportunity for individuals to talk with the volunteer and the dog, to feel, touch, pet and cuddle the dog, to receive unconditional love from the dog and carryout or practice an activity in the presence of the dog.

The Pet Therapy program offers many benefits and improves the quality of lives by allowing the patient greater social engagement, getting patients to participate more in activities, providing stress relief and distraction from pain by offering a comfort, and has also shown to improve self-esteem.

Our Pet Therapy teams come through St. John Ambulance and Therapeutic Paws of Canada, two non-profit organizations of volunteers providing animal resources for human needs (physical, mental, educational, motivational, socialization) through regular visits to hospitals, residences, schools, etc. The Pet Therapy teams provide regular visits in order to develop a bond with their designated patients. At UHN, we have 18 Pet Therapy teams spread across TGH, TWH and TRI.

Next time you see one of our many Pet Therapy teams, feel free to ask for a cuddle. After all, that is their job!





## Take Our Kids to Work Day 2017

Every year in November, grade nine students from across the country participate in Take Our Kids to Work Day – an initiative launched in 1994 by The Learning Partnership, a national charitable organization dedicated to building partnerships to support, promote and advance publicly funded education in Canada. Take Our Kids to Work Day aims to provide grade nine students an opportunity to see firsthand what their parents do every day in their careers and hopes to inspire students to aim for their future career goals. This year, we welcomed over 200 students from across the GTA.

But here at UHN, we do things a little bit different. We take the experience to the next level. Students do not spend the day shadowing just their parent. Instead, they are offered a full day schedule with visitations to four different departments and learn about four very different career paths in healthcare.

In collaboration with the many departments at UHN, Volunteer Resources teams up with them to offer a multitude of learning opportunities across the hospital

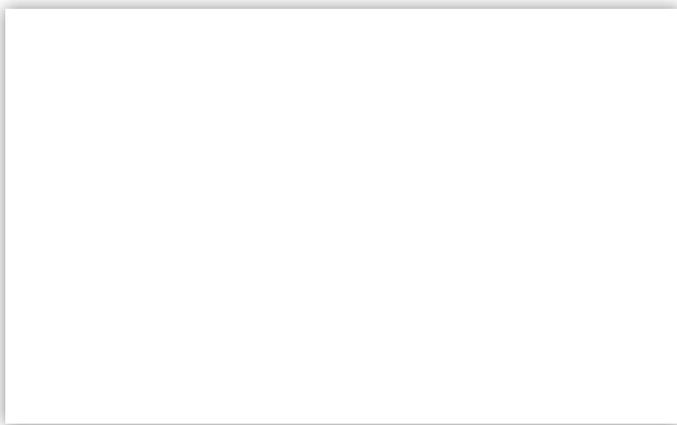
such as visiting the Central Processing department and learning about the many steps necessary in keeping our tools safe for patients. Visits to the Surgical Pathology department offers insight into diagnosing diseased organs and even allows the students to see them up close and personal. The JDMI department shows off their many imaging machines and allows the students to understand how many ways a diagnosis can be seen through imaging. The Medical Engineering department allows students to practice laparoscopic surgery on a dummy and lets them play with robots to remove tumors from brains made of Jello!

“I never knew the hospital could be so fun!” Michael, grade nine student.

We are thankful to all the departments who participated and we hope to continue to inspire the future of healthcare through this great initiative. We know that we will all be in great hands with these bright students at the helm.

## BLOOMING HEARTS

# The Devoted Leaside Garden Society (LGS) Volunteers



The Toronto Rehabilitation Institute – Lyndhurst Centre has benefited greatly from its committed volunteers. A special group of volunteers from the Leaside Garden Society (LGS) has, without hesitation, devoted their time to develop and maintain the gardens at the Lyndhurst Centre for over 15 years. Talk about commitment!

These volunteers have made the long anticipation of spring worthwhile. As early as 8:00 am, these volunteers can be seen on the grounds preparing their masterpiece of flowers. They create an atmosphere of blooming scenery, that is appreciated by patients, caregivers, staff and other volunteers. This allows Lyndhurst Centre to feel less like a rehabilitation centre and more of a home away from home.

According to Barry Schneider, “gardening is therapeutic and volunteering at Lyndhurst, each year, to nurture the flora back to its original state is gratifying, not to mention the comments from patients and others.” If you are thinking of volunteering anywhere, Mr. Schneider has a word of advice for you, which is – “do it because you love it and the gratification that comes with it.....and it will feel less of a chore.”

Visit the Lyndhurst Centre to feast your eyes on the floral ambiance that everyone arriving appreciates daily. Don't be shy to compliment this group of devoted volunteers for a job well done!

## Announcing the Winners of the 2017 MSA Volunteer Educational Award



The recipients of the fourteenth annual Medical Staff Association (MSA) Volunteer Educational award were Khalid Fahoum, Shan Lee, Gianluca Calcagno, Dipashree Chatterjee and Annie (Yidong) Zhan.

This Award recognizes volunteers who have shown an exceptional commitment to volunteering at University Health Network while pursuing their post-secondary education. In keeping with the spirit of giving and education, the award is given to five deserving students in a post-secondary program and is based on their volunteer contributions, their academic performance as well as an essay that captures their volunteer experience. Each year, this award attracts a large number of submissions from volunteers and the selection of the final candidates from those submissions is never easy.

This year was no exception. Khalid, Shan, Gianluca, Dipashree and Annie each received \$1000 towards their post-secondary tuition. We congratulate them on their accomplishment and thank Dr. John Granton and Dr. Eric Horlick, and the Medical Staff Association, as well as Emma Pavlov, Executive Vice President, Human Resources & OD for their support of our volunteers.

## Award recognizes the work of four outstanding UHN volunteers



The UHN Medical Staff Association (MSA) in partnership with Volunteer Resources were honoured to present the 5th Annual MSA Volunteer Recognition Award to one outstanding volunteer from each UHN hospital.

Established in 2013, the award recognizes volunteers who exemplify UHN's Partners in Care values and commitment to being compassionate, collaborative and responsive to human need. Each of the four volunteers personifies Amazing People, Amazing the World.

The Volunteer Resources team at each site selected a qualified volunteer who demonstrated responsibility and reliability, volunteered at UHN for one year or 150 hours, demonstrated a willingness to accept leadership roles or work on special projects, and who acted as a role model or mentor to new volunteers.

Congratulations to the four winners of the 2017 MSA Volunteer Recognition Award: Helen Amenta –Princess Margaret Cancer Centre; Karen Moran –Toronto Western Hospital; Chris Archibald –Toronto Rehab; and Doddy Teng –Toronto General Hospital. Each winner received a cheque for \$250.

Thank you to Dr. John Granton and Dr. Eric Horlick, representing the UHN Medical Staff Association. Thank you also to Emma Pavlov, EVP, Human Resources & Organizational Development for helping to facilitate this award.

## SUCCESS STORY

### Princess Margaret Radiation Therapist Steven Tran

Back in 2003, when started volunteering, I had already been working for 5 years in the fields of engineering and IT. My most recent position was in South-East Asia with an IT consulting firm where I had been thoroughly burnt out from the work schedule. After my contract was over, I decided to backpack around South-East Asia to recuperate and do some thinking about what I wanted to do when I came back to Canada. I had many conversations with other travelers most notably a couple who were both nurses and they got me thinking about changing careers to something health care related. The seed was planted, I started researching fields that sounded interesting and found that a career in radiation therapy could bring together my aptitude and interest for working with technology and my desire to help people. When I came back to Canada, never having exposure to a healthcare environment, I knew it would be a good first step to apply to be a volunteer at the Princess Margaret. Obviously, it was a step in the right direction because I have now been a radiation therapist for over 10 years.

#### **What is your most memorable moment from volunteering with us?**

“Since it was so long ago, it is hard to recall a specific moment. What I can recall was the immense feeling of satisfaction I got from helping people in different ways like providing information, comforting them by lending my ear, or just making them smile.”

#### **What was the biggest lesson you learned through volunteering?**

“I learned many lessons as a volunteer. The one that comes up in every interaction with patients, even to this day, is that every patient has their own story, but they all seem to share common needs such as feeling safe, in control, and the assurance that they are being looked after.”

#### **What advice would you give a new volunteer or someone who is thinking of volunteering?**

“You don’t have to be in a paid position to make a difference in people’s lives. Even little things that volunteers do can make a big difference so whatever you are assigned to do, do it with your full effort and attention and you will achieve greater personal satisfaction and the people who you are serving will benefit the most.”

#### **What do you think all staff should know about volunteers?**

“Volunteers can come from all walks of life and have a wealth of skills and experiences to offer staff and patients. Smile at the volunteers, get to know some of them, and appreciate what they bring to your area.”



Photo by Calvin Heinrichs

**RADIATING**  
  
**CARE**

## **SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

This report would not be possible without the collective effort of our Volunteer Resources staff.

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Co-op Educator: Leeanne Bouteiller

Design: Rubine Red Inc.  
www.rubinered.ca

