Neil Kaye, MD, and Susan Donnelly, MD, have enjoyed many adventures together during their 32 years of marriage. Their latest lifesaving and life-changing adventure was becoming kidney donors.

“Saving lives together: Couple makes life-changing double kidney donation.”

Neil Kaye, MD, and Susan Donnelly, MD, do a lot of things together. Married for 32 years, they’ve had many adventures. But their most recent undertaking took their togetherness to an amazing new level—Neil and Susan became kidney donors, undergoing their donation surgery at MedStar Georgetown Transplant Institute.

“The journey of donating a kidney was another thing for us to do together,” explains Susan. “We had been thinking about donating for a while but had put it on the back burner. Then, our niece had mentioned on Facebook that she donated a kidney, and so we agreed it was time for us to start exploring becoming donors.”

“As physicians, we’ve experienced saving lives throughout our medical careers, but donating a kidney is different because it is lifesaving and life changing, and really anybody can do it,” says Neil. “You don’t have to go to medical school or have special training, you just need to be willing to help. As a psychiatrist, I’ve worked with many patients on dialysis, and it’s a very, very hard way to live. I know how much kidney transplants transform lives.”

Because of their medical backgrounds, Neil and Susan understood the essential factors of undergoing a surgical procedure for kidney donation. And as Delaware continued on page 6
Devoted philanthropists bestow largest single gift to new MedStar Georgetown Medical/Surgical Pavilion.

By Stephanie DeFazio

Outstanding patient care and state-of-the-art advancements in medical technology happen when leaders step forward with vision.

MedStar Georgetown University Hospital recently received a transformational philanthropic investment of $10 million from Shelley and Allan Holt to support the new Medical/Surgical Pavilion. To date, this is the largest gift ever received by MedStar Georgetown.

“Our commitment holds great significance for me because I started my career at MedStar Georgetown back in 1981, and I am honored now to serve on the Board of Directors,” says Shelley. “Allan and I have been impressed by their perpetual drive to advance the future of medicine, scholarly achievement, and access to care for all.”

It was a year ago that Shelley and Allan recognized the extraordinary effort MedStar Health nurses, physicians, and associates were putting into keeping the community safe from COVID-19. “We, like so many others in the region, were moved by the bravery and commitment we saw in our frontline medical professionals,” says Shelley. The couple made a generous philanthropic gift to the Associate Emergency Support Fund and the COVID-19 Critical Needs Fund.

Shelley and Allan’s latest gift supports yet another passion. Their generosity will advance innovative care and revolutionary technology with one of the first intraoperative MRI (iMRI) surgical suites in the region, to be housed in the new pavilion. This technology will assist surgeons with planning and performing complex procedures, improving accuracy, and shortening surgical time for patients with Parkinson’s disease, brain tumors, epilepsy, and other conditions.

“This is truly an investment in the future of medicine, one that will benefit patients across the Washington, D.C., region and beyond,” says Kenneth A. Samet, president and CEO of MedStar Health.

“The Holts’ exceptional commitment will ensure that patients receive tomorrow’s treatments today,” says Michael C. Sachtleben, president of MedStar Georgetown. “We are at an exciting stage in our pavilion campaign, and we know their gift will galvanize future investment.”

The couple, who reside in Georgetown, are devoted philanthropists to causes that focus on innovation, education, and meaningful advancements to the community in which they live. Giving back locally is exceedingly important to them. Their strategic and heartfelt generosity over the years has supported the National Air and Space Museum, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and other institutions that align with their philanthropic goals.

Considering MedStar Georgetown, Shelley and Allan recognize the value of these community-focused advances that enhance the landscape of patient care. “We are proud to call MedStar Georgetown our hospital, and we hope our gift for the new pavilion will encourage others to support it as they can,” Shelley says.

The Medical/Surgical Pavilion will be a world-class academic medical center, with excellence in clinical care, a strong foundation in education, and leading-edge research. As the largest healthcare construction project in Washington, D.C., comprising 477,213 square feet, it will feature 156 private patient rooms, a rooftop helipad with direct access to 31 state-of-the-art operating rooms, and 32 exam rooms in a modernized emergency department. It is scheduled for completion in 2023. See back cover for an aerial rendering.

To learn more about the Medical/Surgical Pavilion and how your support can make a significant impact, visit MedStarGeorgetown.org/MedSurg or call 202-444-0721.
Taking your indoor workout outdoors.

By Kerri Layman, MD, Chief of Service, Emergency Department, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital

Some strive to work out, while others strive to elevate their workout routine. Whichever group you’re in, taking your exercise activities to the great outdoors can benefit your body, boost your emotional health, and improve your quality of sleep.

Whether you’re looking to lose weight, build muscle strength and definition, improve your overall well-being and mindset, or a combination of all three, be clear about your goals as you adapt your routine to the outdoors. Discuss your plans with your doctor as well to make sure you’re taking on the right physical challenges for your age, weight, and health.

Take your routine to the next level: If you enjoy low-impact workouts, try equipment such as medicine balls, low-weight dumbbells, jump ropes, and resistance bands to elevate your workout. If you choose a routine that involves jumping or stretching, bring a nonslip exercise or yoga mat with you. Beyond providing stability, the mat will protect your joints as you move.

Try an outdoor fitness class: If you prefer something different than the self-guided approach, find out if your local gym or park offers outdoor classes, such as yoga, Pilates, tai chi, or group jogging. These are becoming much more common and are great ways to be social while also practicing physical distancing.

Consider safety: Since it is still important to actively minimize the spread of COVID-19, here are some safety tips to consider as you head outside for an effective and enjoyable workout:

• If you’re hitting the trails, check park websites for the latest information, as officials have shut down many visitors’ centers, restrooms, and other facilities due to the pandemic.
• Consider the heat of the day (sunrise and sunset), visibility, and personal safety as you select where and when you will work out.
• Bring or wear layers depending on the time of day. For comfort and best results, the layers should be lightweight and sweat wicking.
• Apply and bring sunscreen to protect your skin.
• Avoid large crowds and remain six feet away from others. Bring a face mask and wear it when others are present.
• Wear the right shoes. High-impact workouts, such as strength or circuit training, require footwear designed for stability and support. For walking and jogging, choose trainers that provide more padding and shock absorption.
• Drink extra water during and after your workout; being dehydrated reduces athletic performance. The recommended amount is 17 to 20 ounces two hours before exercise, and seven to 10 ounces for every 10 to 20 minutes of exercise.
• Bring hand sanitizer, and wash your hands as soon as you get home.

Listen to your body and know your limits. Pushing through rigorous workouts can lead to pain and overexertion. Slow and steady is always the best approach to reaching your personal fitness goals.

With the outdoors as your gym, there are endless possibilities to stay fit and elevate your workout routine, from creative use of bodyweight exercises, to hiking trails, new equipment, or outdoor fitness classes.

Here are a few suggestions on taking your workout outside, safely:

Use the outdoors as your gym and leave your equipment at home: Consider bodyweight exercises, with movements such as push-ups, lunges, burpees, squats, mountain climbers, planks, and scissor kicks. Utilize what’s around you, whether it’s a sidewalk curb for core and balance exercises or park benches for push-ups.

Discover a new trail or path: Explore your local parks and incorporate an uphill routine that combines light jogging and sprinting. Look for ways to include both cardio and strength training. Studies over the past decade have shown that using the outdoors as your track is more motivating and stimulating than using a treadmill indoors.

Our emergency department is always safe and accessible to our community. Visit MedStarGeorgetown.org/ED to learn more about our available services.
Engineer credits proton therapy with beating stomach cancer.

When Jack Yeatts retired at the age of 67 from his career as a space systems project and electrical engineer, he thought he would spend more time with his family and on the golf course in Stone Ridge, Virginia. However, doctors discovered a tumor in his lower esophagus and referred him to MedStar Georgetown University Hospital for treatment.

“They have a great team approach at MedStar Georgetown with an oncologist, surgeon, and radiation oncologist,” explains Jack. “They told me that because of where my tumor was, I was a great candidate for proton therapy instead of standard radiation.”

Jack was thrilled to be a candidate for the most advanced and precise proton therapy treatment available, known as HYPERSCAN™. Because his tumor was at the junction of his stomach and esophagus, conventional radiation could have damaged other nearby healthy organs. Proton therapy offers the promise of greater precision with pinpoint accuracy, depositing protons directly into the tumor, layer-by-layer. Jack received proton therapy five days a week for about six weeks (28 days total) in conjunction with chemotherapy.

“I was glad that proton therapy was an option for me,” Jack says, with relief. “Once I was on the table and set up, it didn’t take long, usually about 10 to 12 minutes, and I didn’t feel anything at all.”

Jack had regular treatment sessions with Radiation Oncologist Keith Unger, MD, director of the Gastrointestinal Cancer Service at MedStar Georgetown, to assess his progress and any side effects.

“Proton therapy can be beneficial for patients with esophageal cancer, as these tumors are surrounded by vital organs, including the lungs and heart,” Dr. Unger explains. “It has been shown, in selected patients like Mr. Yeatts, to significantly reduce the risk of serious complications.”

After a six-week break, Jack underwent surgery at MedStar Georgetown to remove the tumor at the bottom of his esophagus. During the surgery, the portion of the esophagus with the tumor in it and an adjacent portion of his stomach were removed as well. One year later, his follow-up scans were clear. Jack says now he can eat just about anything he wants, but he limits the amount since his stomach is much smaller.

“MedStar Georgetown brought together an awesome medical team to diagnose, treat, and follow up on my cancer to ensure an excellent prognosis. I am amazed at what the team did and grateful to have a future with my family.”

—Jack Yeatts

With this medical challenge behind him, Jack says he is now ready to enjoy his retirement. “My prognosis is good now. It’s amazing what they can do,” he says. “Now, I’m able to spend time with my family. I am doing what I love and no longer focusing on fighting cancer.”

Meet Keith Unger, MD
Visit MedStarGeorgetown.org/Unger to watch Dr. Unger discuss proton therapy.

Jack Yeatts is grateful for a good prognosis following proton therapy treatment for a cancerous esophageal tumor. Now, he can enjoy his retirement with his family and gorgeous days on the golf course.

To find out if proton therapy may be the right treatment for you, visit MedStarGeorgetown.org/ProtonNow or call 202-444-4639 to speak to a clinical expert.
Each year, approximately 53,000 Americans undergo a total or partial shoulder replacement, greatly reducing or eliminating pain and restoring mobility and quality of life.

However, many others are ineligible for traditional replacement due to loss of rotator cuff function or major bone loss from severe arthritis.

For them, Brent Wiesel, MD, chief of Shoulder and Elbow Surgery at the MedStar Orthopaedic Institute, offers help and hope through another approach—the reverse total shoulder replacement or its even rarer alternative, a customized reverse replacement.

“Reverse total shoulder replacement has been a game changer,” says Dr. Wiesel, one of the first orthopaedic surgeons in the Washington, D.C., area to perform the procedure in 2008, who now uses it routinely. “It’s greatly expanded our ability to help more people with incapacitating shoulder pain or immobility.”

A traditional shoulder replacement is similar to a hip replacement in that both the ball and socket are removed and then replaced by a metal ball and plastic socket. A reverse shoulder replacement changes the position of the ball and socket joint so that patients can use a different set of healthy muscles to move their arm, instead of their damaged rotator cuff muscles.

Karen Wright, RN, a longtime employee at the Surgery Center at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, had seen, firsthand, the benefits of Dr. Wiesel’s work. Terrible weakness and pain in her shoulder left her unable to lift her arm, and an X-ray and MRI confirmed the extent of the damage but also revealed something unexpected.

“The surgeries have enabled me to continue to do what I enjoy while also being pain free. I have no limitations whatsoever. Dr. Wiesel and the rest of the Orthopaedics team are just amazing.”

Karen Wright, RN, is grateful to be pain free after having reverse total shoulder replacement surgery. Photo courtesy of Karen Wright

Dr. Kalantar performed what is referred to as a C4-7 anterior cervical discectomy and fusion.

Luckily, with a multidisciplinary approach, the team was able to recognize these issues, which would have complicated her shoulder surgery had they not been addressed prior to it. After Karen’s cervical spine was stabilized, she was cleared for reverse total shoulder replacement about six months later.

By 2019, Karen was finally ready for the surgery she originally sought. However, the passage of time and her progressing arthritis had taken their toll.

“At this point, Karen didn’t have enough good bone left for a standard reverse shoulder replacement,” says Dr. Wiesel. “She needed a specially-made implant that could wrap around her remaining shoulder blade and provide an anchor for the hardware.”

Working with engineers at a leading medical device manufacturer, Dr. Wiesel sent a CT scan of Karen’s shoulder to create parts uniquely designed for her anatomy. A pioneer in orthopaedic surgeries, he was the first surgeon in the area to use customized reverse shoulder components and now performs four or five of the complex procedures each year. He installed her new tailor-made joint in September of 2019.

“My shoulder surgery was actually easy to recover from,” Karen says. “And if I didn’t have my surgeries, I probably wouldn’t be working. The surgeries have enabled me to continue to do what I enjoy while also being pain free. I have no limitations whatsoever. Dr. Wiesel, and the rest of the Orthopaedics team, are just amazing.”

MedStar Georgetown is part of the MedStar Orthopaedic Institute, with over 40 orthopaedic surgeons at locations throughout Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia.

Visit MedStarOrthopaedicInstitute.org for more information.

If you believe you or a loved one may need reverse total shoulder replacement surgery, visit MedStarGeorgetown.org/ReverseShoulder or call 202-295-0549.
Neil had his donation surgery first, then Susan had hers. Throughout the process of the surgery and recovery, they supported each other. “Although we were close before our kidney donations, I think the experience brought us even closer as a couple,” says Susan.

“We are so grateful to Neil and Susan for choosing to be living donors at the Transplant Institute,” says Dr. Verbesey. “Thirteen people die each day waiting for a kidney. With living donation, people can receive the transplant they need quickly. Neil and Susan are helping save lives together.”

To prepare for their surgery and recovery, Susan and Neil followed a diet and exercise regimen to get in their best possible shape. Their efforts paid off. They were able to make a fast return to their normal routines without limitations.

After their experience, Neil and Susan encourage others to consider becoming organ donors as well. “Just knowing you’ve done something sort of miraculous and helped another person live better and probably longer is a great feeling,” says Susan.

Kidney donation is the gift of life. The ability to save a life is within you. Learn more about becoming a living kidney donor at MedStarGeorgetown.org/LD or call 202-444-3714.
Relief and passion for life restored with IBD diagnosis.

eye and then the other. She went to a variety of doctors looking for answers but came up empty.

“It was terrifying,” Erin remembers. “There were many traumatic moments, such as waking up in pain with unexplained fevers. My feet and ankles would swell for weeks, and it was painful to even put weight on them. I thought my body was breaking down. I went from feeling normal and healthy to constantly ill.”

Her frustration led her to find Mark C. Mattar, MD, director of the Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Center at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital. Once she met him, answers came quickly. After a colonoscopy, he immediately diagnosed her with Crohn’s disease, a type of IBD that causes inflammation in the digestive tract and often other parts of the body, too.

“I was scared at first because I didn’t know exactly what the diagnosis meant,” Erin says. “But it was also a relief to finally have an answer. Until I met Dr. Mattar, other doctors had just been treating all of my miscellaneous symptoms. He was the first to identify the cause and create a plan to manage it.”

Dr. Mattar and his multidisciplinary team treat a variety of IBD conditions, including Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis, microscopic colitis, and celiac disease. He says young patients often have difficulty finding their way to a diagnosis but are always reassured when they hear just how advanced treatment options have become.

“A lot of providers see someone young and healthy and think it’s stress and dismiss them,” Dr. Mattar says. “We do not. We take them seriously because early diagnosis helps prevent complications in the future. Surgery is now only needed in about five to 10% of cases because medications aggressively treat these conditions. We combine that with complementary therapies including probiotics, special diets, and more.”

While Crohn’s disease isn’t curable, Dr. Mattar says the IBD Center finds that a multidisciplinary approach can help patients live well with their disease.

“It is a marathon for these patients, and we provide a comprehensive team to help them so they don’t have to search for each specialist on their own.”

One recommended medication required Erin to avoid alcohol—an unfortunate fit for her since she has a second job writing and teaching about spirits, bourbon, and cocktails.

“I told Dr. Mattar—I need a different medication that will still allow me to have a normal life and do my job. He listened and recommended another one,” Erin says. “This is a disease that requires a lifetime of management, so it is extremely helpful to have a good team I can rely on.”

For Erin, now 33, relief has come from infusions, vitamins, supplements, and diet changes. She takes care of herself by maintaining her diet, keeping all of her appointments, and continuing to advocate for herself, too.

To learn more about Crohn’s disease, or to schedule an appointment with one of our gastroenterology specialists, visit MedStarGeorgetown.org/Crohns or call 202-295-0570.
Delivering the best patient care experience: transformational new Medical/Surgical Pavilion to advance health care at MedStar Georgetown.

A trusted leader in patient care, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital is continuing to make a critical impact with the construction of an exciting, new state-of-the-art Medical/Surgical Pavilion that will transform the way world-class care is delivered to meet patient needs today, tomorrow, and well into the future. The 477,213-square-foot pavilion will offer:

- A soothing environment that will accelerate healing and hope
- 156 private patient rooms
- 31 state-of-the-art operating rooms
- 32 exam rooms in a new emergency department
- 3 levels of underground patient parking
- A rooftop helipad
- New outdoor green space for the Georgetown community to enjoy

To learn more, visit MedStarGeorgetown.org/MedSurg or call 202-444-0721.