Auxiliary Donates $250,000 to COVID-19 Pandemic Efforts

Twice a year, the Auxiliary budgets to spend up to $250,000 on projects submitted by hospital departments. On April 7, 2020, members of the Auxiliary Executive Board met via a Zoom meeting to discuss plans for the Spring Donations Cycle. The Executive Board had been prepared to discuss project proposals, but the COVID-19 pandemic changed everything. By a unanimous vote, it was decided the meeting should be used to put together a proposal for a vote by the Full Board regarding the most efficient use of these budgeted funds. Specifically, a decision as to whether or not the Spring 2020 projects should be pushed to Fall 2020 so that the budgeted money could be used to help aid the hospital in efforts related to the COVID-19 crisis.

With the input of both, Bimal Patel, President HH and Hartford Region SVP, HH, and Carol Garlick, VP Philanthropy HH, the Executive Board prepared a proposal for the Full Board's review. An emergency Zoom meeting of the Full Board was called the following day to discuss the proposal and to hold a vote. By a unanimous vote, the Full Board voted to reallocate the $250,000 budgeted for Spring Projects to be used in support of the hospital’s efforts in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, it was decided that the submitted projects would be pushed to the Fall 2020 Donation Cycle and be given undivided attention at that time.

The Auxiliary’s grant was reallocated in several ways. First, $100,000 was dedicated to the Nurses Uniform Initiative. As a result of the pandemic and extraordinary precautions, the nursing staff was finding it necessary to purchase more scrubs at an increased personal expense. Thus, to ease the financial burden of the 3,000 nurses and 500 PCA’s in direct patient care areas, the Auxiliary committed funds to this effort, a gesture that was presented to the nursing staff during Nurses Week.

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Masks sewn by Auxilians Jane Robinson and Hilary Allen and family embroidered with HHC

Jordan Diogoras, owner of J’s Restaurant, practicing social distancing while delivering meals.

Bliss 11-1 sending their thanks
From the Co-Presidents

Dear Auxiliaries,

We are coming to the end of another exciting, yet profound and unexpected year of board activities. On behalf of the Auxiliary Board, we are thankful to report our news of the past year.

Our 2019-2020 season started with yet another record-breaking golf tournament. We donated $150,000 towards the build-out of the Emergency Department Observation Unit (EDOU). The EDOU is for patients who are too sick to be transitioned out of the ED but are not sick enough to be admitted to the hospital. The 20-bed EDOU was built in a space adjacent to the ED allowing for a seamless transition from the ED to the EDOU. This gift from the Auxiliary contributed to the hospital’s goal of increased patient satisfaction. Not only does the EDOU help the patient’s experience during their stay at the hospital, but it also provides greater convenience for the patient’s family as they no longer need to navigate through the hospital to be with their loved one.

We continued to receive strong revenue from Au Bon Pain and welcomed Lori’s Gifts as our new management company for the Auxiliary Store. Earnings from both went towards the $460,000 of donations to the hospital this past year. This includes $21,000 in projects that produce direct, tangible benefits for patients and their families such as three Dexis Platinum Digital x-ray Sensors that will provide increased access and efficient dental imaging in each operatory at the Brownstone Clinic, Compression Supplies and Garments for the HH Rehab Network used for those underserved patients in the lymphedema program, and a SEBRA 2380 Hand Sealer used in the special preparation of blood products for some of the Transfusion Department’s most vulnerable patients. The balance of $250,000 was dedicated to aiding the efforts of the hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic including the purchase of nurses’ uniforms, funding of the Safe Housing Initiative, as well as a meal plan projected to serve 6,250 hospital staff.

Another highlight of the year was our $150,000 gift to the Bliss building expansion. This 50,000-square-foot addition will provide four floors of additional space to support clinical areas including MRI, Interventional Radiology, Electrophysiology, Catheter lab, Critical Care, and Surgical Care. More specifically, our proceeds will be used to fully fund a neurologic software package for one of the new MRIs, advancing the capabilities of the unit for stroke patients receiving care in the Emergency Department.

The Auxiliary would like to thank both, Bimal Patel, President, Hartford Hospital & Hartford Healthcare’s Hartford Region Senior Vice President, and Carol Garlick, Vice President Philanthropy. Their guidance and support of the Auxiliary have been a contributing factor to our continued success.

Although trying times are upon us, we are always looking towards the future and we wish you all a happy and healthy year. Please remember that your membership dues and every dollar you give to the Auxiliary makes a difference, and that the funds we raise for the hospital’s Good Works Fund are used to improve the patient experience.

Best,
Shelley Dodd and Marri Fairbanks
Hartford Hospital Auxiliary Co-Presidents

Changing of the Guard

Elected by fellow board members, Christina Rossi will join Marri Fairbanks as Co-President of the Auxiliary. Christina has been a part of the Auxiliary Board including the Executive Board since 2015. She has held the following positions: Corresponding Secretary, VP of Public Relations, Recording Secretary, and most recently, as VP of Retail Operations, managing the transition to our new Auxiliary Gift Shop manager.

On a personal note, Christina is a breast cancer survivor and works for her family’s construction business, O&G Industries. At O&G, she heads Business Development efforts as well as Health Care Project Management. Christina’s background proves beneficial to the Board when reviewing projects as they pertain to construction and cancer related items. She currently lives in West Hartford with her husband, John, and three children.

Christina Rossi

Auxiliary Donates $250,000 to COVID-19 Pandemic Efforts

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A special mask for Hazel Vail sewn by Hilary Allen

Our very own Hazel Vail teams to quarantine when suspected exposure forces these staff members to not go home until they are cleared.

Second, an additional $100,000 was dedicated to the COVID-19 Pandemic Fund, a fund initiated by the hospital to raise money to cover the unforeseen expenses the crisis has created. Although the COVID-19 Pandemic Fund promises to raise a significant amount of money to assist the hospital, the money donated by the Auxiliary was committed to fund the Safe Housing Initiative. The Safe Housing Initiative was designed to support housing in hotels for hospital staff treating COVID-19 patients, particularly those staff whose family members are at a greater risk. Additionally, the Safe Housing Initiative would also pay for meals to hospital’s care staff to not go home until they are cleared.

Finally, the Auxiliary offered a $50,000 gesture towards a Meal Distribution Plan. With the help of hospital staff, a plan was devised to offer meals to nursing units within varying departments throughout the hospital on a rotating basis. Individually wrapped meals, courtesy of both J’s Restaurant in Hartford and Steve’s Place in Newington, were delivered twice per day to covers both morning and evening shifts. Although the Auxiliary’s plan began with serving the ICU and ED units caring for patients on the front lines, the Auxiliary also made sure to service the ancillary departments also committed to the care of COVID-19 patients, specifically, CESI, who manned the drive-thru testing, as well as the Call Center, who tirelessly answered all incoming calls related to the crisis. In the end, the Auxiliary’s funding was budgeted to offer nearly 6,250 meals.

The Auxiliary is honored to be able to help the hospital during these unprecedented times. The COVID-19 pandemic was certainly a call to action that reminded the Auxiliary exactly why their organization was founded nearly 100 years ago.

Our very own Hazel Vail

Patty Veronneau and nurses with a delivery from J’s Restaurant

The CESI COVID-19 drive-through team

One of the many thank you messages to the Auxiliary

Shelley Dodd
Marri Fairbanks
Christina Rossi

Hartford Hospital Auxiliary Co-Presidents

Our very own Hazel Vail
On September 16, 2019, the Hartford Hospital Auxiliary celebrated the 30th Anniversary of its Annual Benefit Golf Tournament. It was a beautiful day for the first tournament at our new location, the Hartford Golf Club in West Hartford. This new venue was an exciting change for our sponsors, and the golf club staff and course did not disappoint! Over 200 guests enjoyed the gorgeous early fall weather playing golf, participating in contests, bidding in a silent auction, and participating in the first-ever HHA Super Raffle—the most impressive and popular raffle prize was a new Rolex watch! The tournament, staffed almost entirely by volunteers from the Auxiliary Board and employees of Hartford Hospital, raised an impressive $420,000!

The Auxiliary Board was thrilled to support the Emergency Department Observation Unit (EDOU) as the tournament’s beneficiary. Adjacent to the ED, this new unit has dedicated space and staff to care for patients who don’t require admission to the hospital but need more testing or treatment to ensure a safe transition home. The unit will provide specialized care, but will also serve to alleviate some of the crowding in the existing Emergency Department which is among the largest and busiest in the region. The EDOU opened in early April and was immediately put to use treating patients admitted to the hospital with COVID-19.

Please save the date for this year’s tournament which is scheduled for Monday, September 14th at the Hartford Golf Club. Proceeds from the tournament will support Hartford Hospital’s COVID-19 fund, particularly around the area of Innovation in Crisis Response. With the ongoing pandemic, we are not sure what the tournament will look like, or how many of our sponsors will be able to attend. As always, our goal is to celebrate the many successes of Hartford Hospital by bringing together the hospital’s biggest supporters for a day of golf, a sport encompassing camaraderie and generosity. We are grateful for their continued commitment to the hospital and the Hartford Hospital Auxiliary!

In the News

The Auxiliary Co-Presidents were interviewed on WFSB and WTNH to discuss the Auxiliary’s response to Covid-19.

Read to Grow, Building Literacy from Birth

Read to Grow celebrated its 20th year and 2 million books, on October 3, 2019. To mark this milestone, a select group of Auxiliary Board Members and Hartford Hospital Read to Grow volunteers enjoyed a special evening at the New Haven Lawn Club. Roxanne Coady, founder and Chair Emeritus, started the non-profit with a passionate, single-minded cause: to ensure there would be a book for every baby born in Connecticut. The board book “Welcome to the World”, written by CT Author Nancy Elizabeth Wallace, is part of the flagship Books for Babies program that Hartford Hospital and 13 other hospitals throughout the state distributes in a literacy packet, reaching over 60% of babies born in our state every year. Hartford Hospital, the Auxiliary, Volunteer Services and the nursing staff on Bliss 6 have had a strong partnership with Read to Grow since 2008. In the fall of 2019, Hartford Hospital reached 10 Read To Grow volunteers, the largest group to date. This represents daily coverage on the unit most days in the course of any given month. Specifically, volunteer hours for Read to Grow grew from 13% in Q1 to 33% in Q4, which translates to an exciting number of new mothers that are exposed to a personal discussion with a trained volunteer regarding the importance of reading. Hartford Hospitals’ average births have grown to 3,659 annually, which equates to 305 literacy packets distributed each month.

Due to Covid-19, Read to Grow volunteers were suspended on March 13th 2020. In the interim, Hartford Hospital’s Volunteer Services staff has assisted in transporting the necessary books to the unit and the nursing staff on Bliss 6 ensures that each patient has received their literacy packet. This is another testament to the dedicated staff and clinicians working the front line at Hartford Hospital – delivering on the Auxiliaries commitment to improve literacy in Connecticut.
The Auxiliary Store

The Auxiliary and the hospital are very excited to welcome Lori’s Gifts as our new management company to operate the Hospital Auxiliary Store. The store officially opened on February 27th with a grand opening ribbon-cutting attended by Auxiliary board members, hospital leadership and many staff members. Lori’s Gifts is the only nationwide company that specializes in hospital gift shop management—their goal is to provide an exceptional shopping experience for employees, guests, and visitors to the hospital. The store has been completely renovated to reflect the commitment Lori’s has to servicing Hartford Hospital. The store’s modern look features gray wood paneling and a newly configured checkout area to improve customer flow. Merchandise assortment includes an enormous array of individual categories from national and local vendors. Categories professionally merchandised within the shop include gifts, cards, jewelry, small electronic items, fresh flowers, clothing, accessories, sleepwear, slippers, newborn and children’s clothing, games and books, snacks of all kinds, sundries and many other items. In addition to core assortments, the shop will include seasonal merchandise and other items with special events or promotions in mind.

The Auxiliary will collaborate with Lori’s to hold special events and anyone who is a member of the Auxiliary is granted a 10% discount on any purchase. Hospital volunteers will also enjoy 20% off full-price gift items anytime they shop in the store. Most importantly, every sale in the store results in an investment in Hartford Hospital through the proceeds the Auxiliary receives and applies towards funding requests for necessary projects throughout the hospital.

“This is great news for the hospital,” said Shelley Dodd, Co-President of the Auxiliary. “The Hartford Auxiliary Store is not only a gift shop; it’s also here to help patients and families with personal needs when they or a loved one are in the hospital or leaving the hospital.”

We are thrilled to partner with Lori’s Gifts and look forward to a long and successful relationship.

Now Offering Online Shopping

Well-wishers, patients, and employees may now shop online at the Auxiliary Store. Same day delivery is available on many items. Visit LoriGifts.com and click Order For Patients. Choose Hartford Hospital and select from the extensive online selection.

Projects

The Auxiliary commits $15,000 Annually to Hartford Healthcare’s Rehab Network

Lymphedema Program

The Auxiliary in Fall 2017 ($7,300), Fall 2018 ($8,000), and again in Fall 2019 ($12,000) provided funding for the purchase of compression supplies and garments for Hartford Healthcare’s Lymphedema Program. Many of the patient’s underserved patients are not able to afford these items which may not maintain swelling reduction achieved during therapy. Linda Hodgkins, Lymphedema Program Manager, presented to the Auxiliary last fall, explaining that Medicare and some commercial insurance providers do not cover bandaging supplies needed for lymphedema therapy as the compression garments required after therapy and to help reduce swelling during treatment. This prohibits some patients from participating in therapy at all, leaving them not only in severe discomfort but at increased risk for life-threatening infections or developing open wounds that are difficult to heal and more costly to treat.

Operating through Hartford Healthcare’s six Rehab Network sites, the Lymphedema Program’s needs continue to grow substantially every year. To ensure that these underserved patients will have access to this critical support, the Auxiliary has further committed an annual contribution of $15,000 toward the purchase of these supplies and garments. Hopefully this will ensure that underserved patients such as those with leg edema and breast cancer-related lymphedema, won’t have to go without treatment due to financial limitations.

Recap of Fall 2019 Project Funding

The Auxiliary is pleased to announce that for Fall 2019, twenty-one projects totaling $235,320 were funded:

1.  $30,000 for the Pain Treatment Center to use the Precision Pain and Psychotropic (PPF) Treatment for Women; allowing for gene-guided dual prescribing of pain and psychiatric drugs.
2.  $24,074 for the Surgical Trauma ICU, C8I to purchase a new CORTRAK machine, which is used for feeding tubes, to minimize complications and reduce patient suffering.
3.  $23,697 for the Brownstone Dental Clinic to purchase 3 Dexo Platinum Digital X-ray Sensors, to provide increased access and efficient dental imaging in all 12 operatory rooms. This will also decrease patient wait times and increase patient experience.
4.  $23,654 for the Physical Medicine to purchase 5 exam tables and 5 Welch Ailwyn Wall Units, a diagnostic system used to measure blood pressure, and temp, and 10.
5.  $11,950 for Echocardiography to purchase 2 ADA compliant low height scanning beds for the performance of outpatient transthoracic echocardiograms. These lower beds make it easier for elderly and disabled patients to use without the need of a step stool.
6.  $17,452 for the Phlebotomy Lab to purchase 4 AccuVein AV500 devices. Venipuncture is the most common invasive procedure. Phlebotomy will use these vein illumination devices which will help locate the patient’s peripheral veins easily and quickly by displaying the position of the veins in the patient’s skin.
7.  $17,405 for the IOL, Donnelly 2 North to renovate its Adolescent Inpatient Psychiatric Unit Comfort Room, which provides therapeutic support for adolescent patients on an acute psychiatric inpatient unit.
8.  $15,000 for CESI to complete the development of a new training program to educate physicians, advance practitioners and nurses about the insertion of temporary transvenous pacemakers.
9.  $12,000 for the Lymphedema Program to purchase compression supplies and garments for underserved patients who may not be able to afford the items, to maintain swelling reduction achieved during therapy.
10.  6,700 for Medicine/Adult Primary Care to purchase a variety of tools to help improve patient care.
11.  $8,953 for the Emergency Department to purchase 3 Addison 430 Continuous Glucose Monitoring Devices, which can be placed on the patient to monitor their glucose recordings continuously for 5 to 10 days. This real-time data is used to make educational changes to the patient’s insulin regimen that can control their diabetes.
12.  $8,700 for Medicine/Adult Primary Care to purchase 3 Professional G4 Dexcom Continuous Glucose Monitoring Devices, which can be placed on the patient to monitor their glucose recordings continuously for 5 to 10 days. This real-time data is used to make educational changes to the patient’s insulin regimen that can control their diabetes.
13.  $2,593 for the Rehabilitation Department to purchase 50 copies of the Hartford Courant for patients and families in inpatient and waiting rooms.
14.  $2,576 for Transfusion Services to purchase a SEBRA 2380 hand sealer, which is used in the special preparation of blood products for some of our most vulnerable patients. This highly specialized machine removes nearly every impurity in the blood.

15.  4,200 for the Transplant Department/CB3 to purchase a blanket warmer as a non-pharmaceutical intervention that brings immediate comfort, especially in post-op patients.
16.  2,950 for the Thrombectomy Department to purchase a variety of tools to help improve medication adherence for solid organ transplant recipients.

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16. $2,600 for Adult Primary Care Services to purchase two Think Pad Laptops so that nurses and providers of diabetic patients can better assess and manage these patients’ diabetic care. The think pads will enable staff to download meters and obtain and access blood sugar levels and summary logs.

17. $2,480 for the Diabetes Life Care Program to set up an additional screening room to help staff and providers provide patient satisfaction and decrease wait time for the room processing. Currently, there are longer patient wait times as there is only one screening room available.

18. $2,263 for Bliss 6 Nursery to purchase an IV transilluminator, which allows the provider inserting the IV the ability to see newborns’ veins easily to help minimize the need for multiple attempts for successful IV insertion.

2019 Recap of Fall Project Funding

19. $2,109 for the Cardiac Stress Lab to purchase 8 Littman Master Cardiology Stethoscopes, which make it easier for nurses to hear patients’ blood pressure while on the treadmill.

20. $2,075 for IOL. Young Adult Services to develop and create a patient comfort room with sensory items to assist young adults recently diagnosed with the first episode of psychiatric spectrum disorder. These young adults will use this space as a coping room, where they can learn alternative, healthy ways to tolerate their unresolved symptoms.

21. $2,070 for North 8 Women’s Health to purchase a Hoyer lift and slings to be used for safe patient transfer from the bed to chair. This need has increased as N8 now has 12 dedicated medicine beds.

Employee Holiday Party

Happy Helpers Hustle at the 2019 Hartford Hospital Employee Holiday Party

Enthusiasm and enjoyment were displayed in equal measure by all parties involved in the Annual Hartford Hospital Employee Party on December 6, 2019. The Auxiliary Board volunteered their time by spreading good cheer and assisting with replenishing the buffet tables and the punch station, all very capably managed by Auxiliary Emerita extraordinary, Hazel Vail. In addition to volunteering their time, the Auxiliary supports the party financially and provides lovely poinsettia plants as door prizes.

The Employee Party was very well attended, an estimated 2500 guests were served. As party guests entered the lobby they were warmly greeted by Patti Maciag, Lynn Robinson, and Paige Abrams of the Membership Committee, inviting new members and explaining our mission.

Wayne Oden, of Food and Nutrition Services, headed up a team of highly efficient and friendly colleagues. Cari Piper and her team in Human Resources assisted the other services. They seemed to have anticipated needs and timelier deliveries from the main cafeteria expertly. It was wonderful to see the attendees enjoy a rare opportunity to sit, socialize, and enjoy bountiful and delicious food with their coworkers.

The Auxiliary is so very grateful to its members for sharing their time and talent as ambassadors for our organization. Holiday Helpers this year included Jane Robinson, Shelley Dodd, Jennifer Wedeles, Gretchen Haines, Julie Corroon, Jen Face, Kim Conrad, Jillian Puzio, Marri Fairbanks, Kim Shea, Robin Kriesberg, Kim Shea, Kathy Herzog, Hilary Allen, Amy Steinberg, Patti Maciag, Lynn Robinson, Paige Abrams, and HHIA Board Employee Party Chair Cornelia Hull.

2020-2021 Hartford Hospital Auxiliary Scholarships for Employee Sons and Daughters

The Hartford Hospital Auxiliary Board is excited to recognize the winners of the Hartford Hospital Auxiliary Scholarships for Employee Sons and Daughters for the 2020-2021 academic year. The Auxiliary Scholarships for Employee Sons and Daughters are competitive, merit-based scholarships, with one-time awards of $750 and up. All scholarships are awarded to children of Hartford Hospital employees. The $10,000 Hazel Vail Scholarship is the top scholarship given and is in honor of a most loyal, determined, and forward-thinking woman. An Auxiliary Board Member from 1992 to 2015, Hazel Vail has been a volunteer at Hartford Hospital since 1979 and has dedicated over 13,000 hours of service. Hazel’s spirit and energy continue to inspire, and we are proud to present a scholarship in her name.

In April 2020, the Auxiliary Board awarded 29 scholarships totaling $75,000 for the 2020-2021 academic year. The winner of the $10,000 Hazel Vail Scholarship was Taylor Guasta of Glastonbury, CT. Taylor is the daughter of Tina Guasta, a Supervisor in the Respiratory Care department and an employee of Hartford Hospital for over 30 years. Taylor will be a Junior at the University of Connecticut where she is working towards her major, an Integrated Bachelor’s/Master’s program for English Education.

Additionally, 28 students received Sons and Daughters Scholarships. Tahlia Ramos was awarded $5,000 and Stephanie Butler, Cameron Carlin, Courtney Daigle, Cameron Pedemonti and Andrew Wendorff were each awarded $4,000. Twenty-two additional students received awards ranging from $3,000 to $1,000. The Auxiliary would like to congratulate all the scholarship recipients.

2020-2021 Hartford Hospital Auxiliary Scholarship for Outstanding Hartford Hospital Volunteer

Each year, the Hartford Hospital Auxiliary provides a scholarship to one outstanding student and volunteer in the Hartford Hospital Volunteer Program. This year’s winner is Mackenzie Lynch. Mackenzie is currently a senior at Simsbury High School and has a 3.98 GPA. At Simsbury High School, she is involved with various activities including the Varsity Ice Hockey team, Varsity Field Hockey team, National Honor Society, French National Honor Society, Unified Sports, and the Best Buddies program.

2020-2021 Volunteer Scholarship Winner Mackenzie Lynch

Mackenzie has volunteered at Hartford Hospital since 2017 and has amounted a total of 310 hours in various nursing units, the activity cart, and in her current role as a Shift Leader, a leadership role in the Volunteer Program.

Au Bon Pain Café

The Auxiliary’s relationship with Au Bon Pain Café continues to be strong. Located in the main lobby of Hartford Hospital, the café is happily frequented by our hospital community and guests. In addition to offering freshly prepared sandwiches, salads and desserts, the café also provides breakfast, lunch, and snack catering options for hospital meetings and group gatherings. All Au Bon Pain purchases benefit the Hartford Hospital community, as all fees the Auxiliary receives from Au Bon Pain go into the funds the Auxiliary uses to support important hospital projects.
I hope you and your loved ones are staying well. I’d like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and for adhering to social distancing recommendations to help us flatten the curve against this terrible virus. While it might seem like there is no end in sight to this pandemic, it’s important for you to know that our staff’s efforts continue to make an enormous difference. To date, more than 400 Covid-19 patients who had been in our care have been transitioned out of the hospital and are on the road to complete recovery. For those we have lost, the compassion of our staff has been awe inspiring as reflected in this recent Facebook message from the family of a dying patient.

“All of the nurses called us every day, put our dad on FaceTime so we can see him, and answered our calls no matter what time of day. They left their families behind to care for our loved one like he was a member of their family. God bless Hartford Hospital and all providers around the world.”

I have also been inspired by the outpouring of support from the community which continues to salute the heroic work of our staff through donations of supplies, food and financial support. Most notably, a recent $250,000 commitment from the Hartford Hospital Auxiliary will have a direct and immediate impact on our frontline staff’s fight against the virus. I am profoundly grateful for this generous gift and for the Auxiliary’s long history of identifying and funding initiatives that are crucial to our patients, staff and community.

Please be assured that even during these uncertain times Hartford Hospital continues to deliver the expert care our community has come to expect and that we are taking every precaution necessary to keep our patients and staff safe.

Thank you again for your support and for entrusting us with your care.

Sincerely,
Bimal Patel
President, Hartford Region
Senior Vice President, Hartford HealthCare

Rx For Cheer – A Wine Tasting

Over 200 people “attended” our first-ever virtual fundraising event, Rx for Cheer – A Wine Tasting, on May 15, 2020, benefiting Hartford Hospital’s Covid-19 Pandemic Fund. The event was live-streamed and featured Faith Middleton, founder of Food Schmooze, Mark Raymond of Carolina Wine Brands, wine broker Alex Province, and Chris Prosperi of Metro Bis. It was a fantastic and interactive event with a different bottle of wine opened every 15 minutes as the food and beverage professionals explained the wonderful aspects of each. Food suggestions and recipes were provided as well. The audience members were able to submit questions to Hartford Hospital’s Rebecca Stewart who moderated the panel. Almost $50,000 was raised thanks to many generous donors and sponsors. Video stories were shared that featured brave and remarkable frontline workers along with a moving story about a patient named Jay who has fully recovered after spending several weeks in the hospital in critical care. We give tremendous thanks to the Philanthropy Department that worked tirelessly to host this incredibly successful virtual event. We are hopeful that we can return to our traditional in-person Rx for Fun event next year!

2019 Rx For Fun Recap

An "axe"traordinary evening was had by all who attended the 11th Annual Rx for Fun to benefit Hartford Hospital’s Center for Education, Simulation, and Innovation (CESI). Friends of the Auxiliary gathered at Montana Nights in Newington for axe throwing and fun, and to meet CESI’s newest piece of technology: Axel, the Sim Dog, is a life-size, state-of-the-art, hands-on canine training simulator. Axel growls, whimpers, and barks via remote control and officers train on the Sim Dog just as doctors or nurses train on simulated medical mannequins. Designed in partnership with the Department of Defense for canine first responders, Axel is the first Sim Dog in the U.S. to be used as a training tool in a healthcare education environment. There are only 31 dogs like Axel in use across the country, and until now, all Sim Dogs have been used by the military. K-9 handlers from across the state and the country can come to CESI to learn necessary medical training for their canine partners. When guests were not axe throwing, the Auxiliary presented CESI with a $10,000 check to further training in a healthcare education environment.

State of the Hospital

I hope you and your loved ones are staying well. I’d like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and for adhering to social distancing recommendations to help us flatten the curve against this terrible virus.

While it might seem like there is no end in sight to this pandemic, it’s important for you to know that our staff’s efforts continue to make an enormous difference. To date, more than 400 Covid-19 patients who had been in our care have been transitioned out of the hospital and are on the road to complete recovery.

For those we have lost, the compassion of our staff has been awe inspiring as reflected in this recent Facebook message from the family of a dying patient.

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Please be assured that even during these uncertain times Hartford Hospital continues to deliver the expert care our community has come to expect and that we are taking every precaution necessary to keep our patients and staff safe.

Thank you again for your support and for entrusting us with your care.

Sincerely,
Bimal Patel
President, Hartford Region
Senior Vice President, Hartford HealthCare
This tremendous show of support and recognition of Auxiliary efforts during these unprecedented times is critical to our ability to continue our good work throughout the hospital community. Please know your Member Dues and Annual Donations benefitted patients, their families, visitors, employees, and volunteers. This year, with your help, the Auxiliary was able to respond in support of our heroes – the hospital staff, in a time of unprecedented need.

Please visit our website at hartfordhospital.org/auxiliary for more information and an easy way to join/donate.

Thank you for your continued support.