

THE ADVOCATE

A quarterly publication of The Advocates for Upstate Medical University

Winter 2021

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2021 Year-End Campaign & Valentine's Day drawing raise nearly \$6,000



Advocates for Upstate's **2021 Year-End Campaign**, which ended Dec. 31, raised nearly \$5,500, in large part due to a generous donation by C&S Foundation, Inc.

Proceeds from the campaign go toward the Advocates' Nellie Hurley Scholarship Program that benefits qualifying Upstate Medical University employees and adult volunteers who are pursuing undergraduate degrees in the health professions.

Congratulations to Dana Savici, MD, and to Theresa Devennie, winners of our 2021 Year-End Campaign gift baskets.

The Advocates' Grants Program benefited from \$405 raised through the organization's **Valentine's Day drawing** that also resulted in two additional \$100 donations to our organization. The Advocates annually awards grants to benefit Upstate's patient care, patient education and staff enrichment programs.

Congratulations to Lynn Scott who was randomly selected as the winner of the gift basket that included chocolates, gift certificates to Francesca's Cuccina Restaurant and Westcott Florist, and more.



The campaign and the drawing were activities of the Advocates' Marketing and Fund Development committees. They were promoted through a series of creative Facebook and Instagram posts, an email blast to our membership and through Upstate Medical University's weekly Upstate Announcements publication.

Interested in joining the Marketing and Fund Development committees? Call 315-464-5610 or email advocates@upstate.edu.

Be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram and to share our posts.

Advocates grant helps children of adult patients



Allison Della Penna is very grateful for the Advocates grant in support of the COAP (Children of Adult Patients) program.

The Certified Child Life Specialist with the Pediatric Burn Clinic described the help the grant made possible for nine-year old and seven-year old children whose mother was hospitalized with severe burns over the holidays. For more than three weeks the children could not visit their mother.

COAP supported virtual visits, paid for dolls with the same dressings as Mom had so her children

could be prepared for when she came home, paid for voice recorders with messages from Mom placed inside stuffed animals, bought books to help kids process scary things happening to their caregivers such as "A Terrible Thing Happened."

"COAP, and Advocates support, bridges the gap where these children weren't previously getting this level of support," says Della Penna. She hopes the program will expand beyond burn patients.

The Advocates Grants Committee is evaluating the 2022-23 proposals this spring and the awards will be listed in the next Advocates newsletter and on the Advocates website at upstate.edu/advocates.

In Memoriam: Former Advocates President Helen Carlson

The Advocates pays special tribute to its former President Helen (Oke) Carlson, who passed away last November at the age of 99.

A nurse by profession, Helen volunteered at Upstate for more than 30 years.

She served as President of the Advocates (then called the Auxiliary to Upstate Medical Center) from 1973 to 1975. A long-standing member of our organization, she also held the position



of chair of the Gift Shop and served on various planning committees for special events.

We remember Helen for her kind, loving and giving personality and we extend our sincere condolences to her loving family.

Helen's obituary can be found at <https://obits.syracuse.com/us/obituaries/syracuse/name/helen-carlson-obituary?id=31545958>

January blood drives exceed goal



Upcoming Blood Drives

Setnor Academic Building, Downtown Campus

Thursday, April 7, 11:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Friday, April 8, 7 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Cafeteria, Upstate Community Hospital

Wednesday, April 13, 12 p.m.—5 p.m.

The COVID-19 pandemic has seriously impacted blood collections, including at Upstate. With the help of Advocates and Upstate medical student volunteers, the January drives at Upstate University Hospital and Upstate Community Hospital exceeded the goals set by the local American Red Cross office. The drive downtown collected 76 units, almost 50 percent above goal while the drive at Community saw 28 units collected, almost 60 percent above goal.

American Red Cross Senior Account Manager Katie Stepanian said “we are very grateful to all at SUNY Upstate for answering the call and for your continued partnership and support.”

Advocates Administrative Coordinator Jonathan Adler dressed as “Blood Drop” and was joined by medical student Abhishek Doshi to recruit donors preceding the January drives.

For more information on upcoming drives, including a link to registration, go to <https://www.upstate.edu/specialevents/blood-drive.php>

Save The Date: Advocates Annual Luncheon May 3

After two years of Zoom annual meetings, the Advocates Annual Meeting & Luncheon, featuring special presentations and elections of new directors and members, is being planned to be **in person** on Tuesday, May 3 at noon at the Collegian Hotel (formerly the Genesee Grande). Formal invitations will be sent soon.

Meet The Advocate: Ellen Abbott

Ellen Abbott, an Advocates member and chair of the Marketing Committee, works closely with the Fund Development Committee to create campaigns. She has expanded the social media presence of The Advocates by creating our Instagram account and by continuing to increase our presence on Facebook. The interviews Ellen has conducted with a medical student and youth scholarship winner help to tell the story of The Advocates.

After having graduated from Homer High School and SUNY Brockport with a bachelor's degree in Communication and Political Science, Ellen worked in radio stations in Bradford, PA, Ithaca, Rochester and Syracuse. She currently is a freelancer and still does stories in Syracuse for WRVO, a public radio station based in Oswego.

Ellen and her husband, Darryl Geddes, who works



in Public and Media Relations at Upstate, started working the same day at the Ithaca station, but then moved on to public relations. They have three children – Jack Henry, who works for 325 Productions in Rochester and Syracuse, Olivia, a graphic designer for Oeuf in Brooklyn, and Anna Grace who manages a Starbucks in Brooklyn.

Ellen enjoys gardening and is an ardent Buffalo Bills fan.

Ellen hopes to spread the word about what The Advocates are and how they help the community. At this time when health care is in the spotlight, and there are special challenges because of the diminished health care work force, she believes The Advocates has a place encouraging others to move ahead with their health care education. The grants that The Advocates give to special programs help the health care system as well. Despite the funding issues created by the pandemic, Ellen believes we can continue with this vital mission.

Youth Scholar pursuing her dream



We first met Emma Tucker in the spring of 2020, when the high school senior was awarded an Advocates Youth Scholarship. A student at Rochester Institute of Technology, Emma reports that "The Advocates for Upstate scholarship is making my dream of becoming a Physician's Assistant a reality."

Each spring Advocates awards up to four \$1,500 scholarships to graduating seniors who have served as volunteers at Upstate and who meet program requirements.

Follow Advocates on Facebook and Instagram

There is no better way to keep up with Advocates for Upstate's day-to-day activities and news of interest than by following Advocates on Facebook and Instagram. Please make sure to follow us, share our posts, and encourage your friends to follow us.

Marketing Chair Ellen Abbott manages our social media presence and always welcomes news, pictures or videos to post and share. You can contact her at abbott.ellen@gmail.com.



ADVOCATES FOR UPSTATE

*Supporting healthcare and scholarship
through fundraising and service*

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Contracts News

COVID continues to have a hold on patients, visitors, staff, and our vendors. The pandemic has made it difficult for our vendors to recruit and retain staff which directly impacts the hours of operations for their businesses. The Advocates continues to work with them to seek out opportunities to improve and/or expand services. We anticipate that within the next few weeks we will be able to complete contract negotiations with various accounts and provide additional opportunities that will benefit all. So please, remember to visit our vendor partners and support them, which in turn support the Advocates.

Do you want to join our leadership team?

The Advocates is led by its Board of Directors —a creative team of volunteers who come from all walks of life and who are committed to supporting healthcare and scholarship initiatives at Upstate Medical University through fundraising and service.

We welcome individuals who are interested in joining our Board of Directors and having a voice in administering the affairs of The Advocates on behalf of our general membership.

The Board meets about six times a year for one-hour with the option of in-person or zoom participation and takes a hiatus during the summer months. Employees of Upstate Medical University and employees and vendors of The Advocates are not eligible for officer nomination. Newly elected Board members are installed at the Advocates annual meeting in May and take office immediately.

If you know of someone or if you are interested in serving the Advocates as a Board member, or would like more information, contact Sharon Putney at putneyse@yahoo.com or contact the Advocates: advocates@upstate.edu, 315-464-5610.

Advocates brighten the holidays at Upstate Community Hospital



The Advocates Service Committee, co-chaired by Jean Pirozzi and Bertha Jacobs, once again put up holiday decorations in the East lobby at Upstate Community Hospital to bring some cheer to patients, families, staff and volunteers.

Pictured are (L-R) Jane Horyl, Donna Breen, Don Breen and Gerri McLaughlin. Also participating were Judy Davis, Jean Pirozzi and Bob Jutton.