



# DONOR IMPACT NEWSLETTER

Winter 2024 Edition



## RUNNING FOR A CAUSE— KARL'S STORY

Running has always been a de-stressor for donor Karl, taking his inspiration from long-distance runners like Emil Zátopek and Eliud Kipchoge. These days, however, Karl's reason to run is much closer to home.

In March 2022, Karl's wife Vinita was diagnosed with rare and aggressive

stage 4 uterine cancer. Since her diagnosis, Vinita has undergone surgery and completed a total of 12 rounds of chemotherapy at the R.S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre, with Karl and daughter Vivienne, a nurse at Lakeridge Health, by her side.

Karl connected with the Foundation in late 2022 with the goal of raising funds for the Cancer Centre in honour of the spectacular care provided for Vinita. "We are so grateful for the care that she is receiving," says Karl.

At the young age of 70, Karl tapped into his passion for running and

joined the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon in October 2023. Using his personal Foundation fundraising page he received an incredible 74 donations, surpassing his goal and raising \$11,220 to date thanks to generous donor support.

Living by the phrase 'don't let your mind limit you', Karl has already begun training for his next marathon in October.

**"Vinita made the prediction as soon as I completed the race this year that I would be running again," says Karl. "Call me crazy, but it's what I love to do!"**

**Your Gift Helps Provide the Best Patient Care, Close to Home. Donate Today!**

## Our Cancer Campaign Update

Over the past few months, we've seen a tremendous outpouring of support from our community to meet the \$20 million Our Cancer Campaign goal! We're working hard to process every gift and count every dollar in anticipation of announcing the campaign's grand total.

On behalf of our staff, patients, and the families who come through our doors every day, **thank you so much for your support!**

**This is our cancer.**

## A MESSAGE FROM BETH AND PAUL

**Dear Donor Family: Thank You!** We put out the call, and you answered. From our families to yours, we want to express our sincerest gratitude for joining us in an effort to meet the ambitious Our Cancer Campaign goal.

Though we are waiting on an update on the financial impact, there's no denying that this campaign has done more than just raise funds – it has brought our community closer together.

**Thank you for sharing your stories, honouring your loved ones, and coming together to stand with our Hospitals.**

Your dedicated support is truly helping the patients and families who rely on Lakeridge Health and the R.S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre for exceptional cancer care, close to home.

– Kelly Family and Norm, Paul and Scott Mackie



Beth Kelly and Paul Mackie Sr.

## BRINGING COLOUR TO THE DRCC

The waiting areas of the R.S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre (DRCC) are now a little brighter thanks to donor support and a partnership between Lakeridge Health and O'Neill Collegiate and Vocational Institute (OCVI).

Thanks to the Beryl Soldin Endowment Fund, set up by the late Charles Soldin to honour his wife and enhance comfort and experience in the DRCC, OCVI students brightened up the waiting room with tree murals painted on poles throughout the Cancer Centre.

Students got started with the project this past fall and the murals were completed in early December.

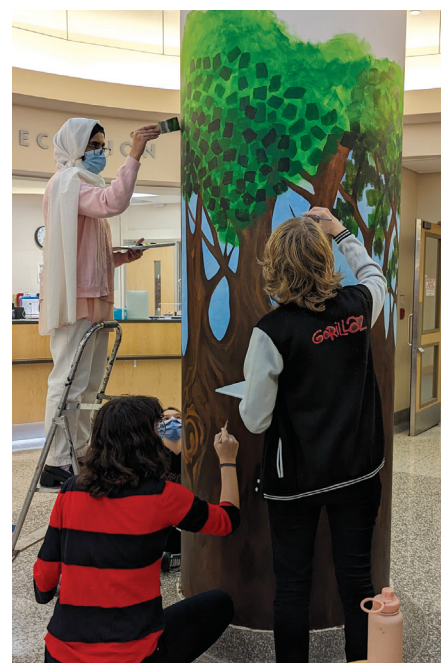
Jennifer Fabris, Visual Arts Teacher at OCVI, shared that completing the project not only hit home with her, but some of her students as well.

**"We are all touched by cancer," she expressed. "Everyone knows someone or has lost someone to cancer and it felt like a simple way to give back to a very important facility in our community. When my Mom was sick, all of her treatments were at Lakeridge Health and she spoke highly of everyone there, so this project is also very personal for me."**

"I had one student find me after school to let me know that her Mom had been there for testing just after we finished," she said. "When she got home she said, 'Are those your trees? They are beautiful!' – that was very heartwarming."

Since the completion of the tree paintings, the added colour in waiting areas have garnered positive attention from patients as well, including DRCC patient Patricia, who remarked:

"They are gorgeous. I love all the colour the students have added to what were once blank poles."



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# SPOTLIGHT: LINEAR ACCELERATOR



At the R.S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre, radiation therapy is one of the most common forms of treatment for cancer patients, and approximately 40,000 radiation treatments are performed per year using a Linear Accelerator, or LINAC.

An essential piece of equipment, the LINAC provides external or beam radiation therapy with intricate machinery to process precise measurements, down to the millimetre, and directs high-energy radiation at cancerous tumours in the body. These exact measurements help to limit exposure to surrounding organs and tissue.

Used as part of a patient's comprehensive treatment plan, planning and data are used with the LINAC to calculate the best location and position.

"A patient's first visit is a planning appointment," says Christine Black, Patient Care Manager, Radiation Therapy. "The patient will have imaging done for part of the planning process, which uses CT and MRI. Imaging determines the location of the treatment and helps determine the best position for the patient."

**Donor support is incredibly important for maintaining and bringing in new equipment.**

When it's time for treatment, patients are seen by their Radiation Therapist who uses the LINAC's imaging equipment to align the beam with the treatment area. Treatments can range anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour depending on a number of variables,

including the area and radiation dosage. Patients can even have multiple areas treated in the same session.

In April of 2023, donations from *Our Cancer Campaign* helped bring in a new LINAC to the DRCC.

The new machine is one of 7 LINACs that run for 10 hours every day, five days a week and see approximately 30 patients a day. This means that the newest machine will provide 7,800 radiation treatments in its first year!

"Donor support is incredibly important for maintaining and bringing in new equipment," says Christine. "It helps us do what we need to do for patients and ensure our team has the best equipment available to them. Donor generosity is very much appreciated by our staff and patients."

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## RECOGNIZING EXCEPTIONAL CARE

Through our Circle of Gratitude program, we have the privilege of hearing stories of the compassionate care you receive at our Hospitals.

Recently, Radiation Oncologist Dr. Jimmy Mui was honoured to learn that three generous donors made gifts in honour of his care since August 2023.





One grateful patient shared that they were “extremely happy” with the care Dr. Mui provided, and wanted to

donate to give back with the message:

**“My main goal was to donate to thank all the people who helped and took such great care of me. The care and professionalism I've received during my treatments was excellent and I wanted to show my appreciation.”**

If you want to learn how to thank a team member for the care you've received at Lakeridge Health, visit [www.CircleofGratitude.ca](http://www.CircleofGratitude.ca) or call our office at **905-433-4339**.

## Connect with your community. Connect with us!

-  @lhfoundation\_
-  @lakeridgehealthfoundation
-  @LHFoundation\_
-  Lakeridge Health Foundation

**Have a story to share?**  
We'd love to hear it. Contact Adrienne at [aburns@lh.ca](mailto:aburns@lh.ca) or **905-576-8711 ext 32784**.

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## Spreading Holiday Cheer!

Over the holidays, the Healthy Aging Team at the Whitby and Oshawa Hospitals spread the spirit of the season by gifting special presents to their patients. This initiative was funded by our Foundation and made possible by your support!

**“Our patients were so grateful to receive these gifts, so we owe a big thank you to Foundation donors for providing us with the opportunity to do so,”** says Jenn Otvos, Complex Continuing Care team member. **“We have many patients that don't have a lot, so it's so nice to be able to provide them with some holiday cheer.”**

In 2023, we were proud to share that this initiative was expanded beyond the Whitby Hospital to also include patients in Oshawa. A big thank you to our donor community for making spirits bright this holiday season!

