



# The Power of One, the Power of Many

**MRS. WALLACE PLAYS WITH TODDLERS,** lab technician Devin Mack teaches sculpting, and therapy pets work their magic. Behind the scenes, a small army of volunteers work to comfort patients and families, and to ensure that physicians, researchers and staff have the funds they need to pursue critical research and clinical advances. Welcome to our world of volunteers.

## Give Time and Comfort

**GENEVA WALLACE** has always loved babies. Growing up, she says, “we always had someone’s baby visiting in the house.” Today the retired Calvert County elementary school principal spends Monday mornings playing with patients on the Infant and Toddler unit. There is “just something about helping these innocent little children that keeps me coming in every week,” she says. Her daughter, Tria Tucker, the television services coordinator at The Johns Hopkins

Hospital, first suggested Wallace volunteer seven years ago upon her retirement. After training, Wallace began her volunteering years rocking babies and singing to them. Today, her loving care might include comforting the child who is lonely or giving another a stroller ride around the unit. “What I do frees the nurses tremendously,” says Wallace, “so they can take care of children’s medical needs. They are so appreciative of the volunteers.” ■



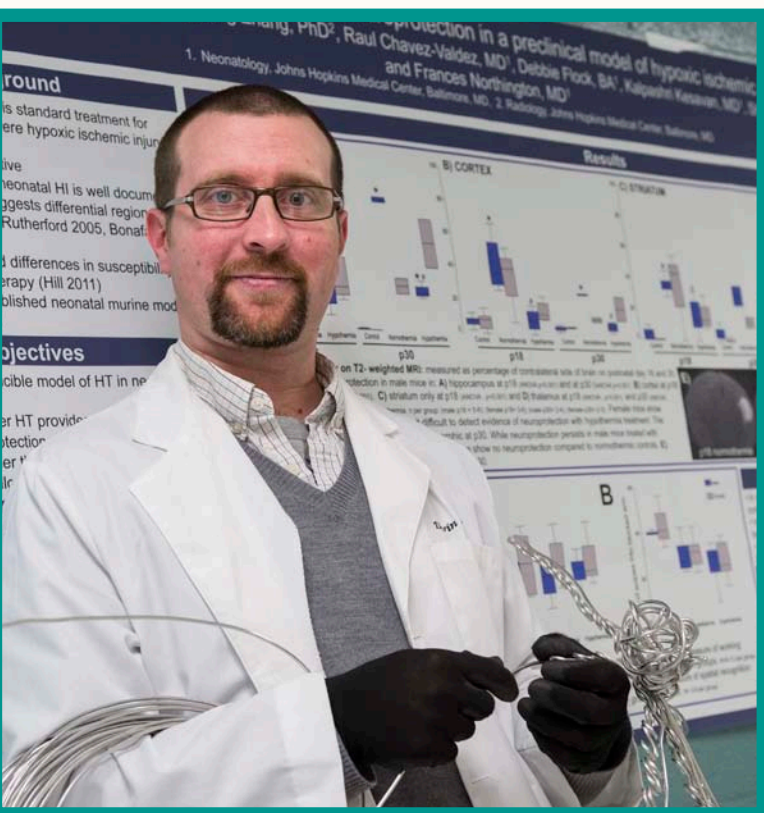
## Empower with Craft

**CAROL DAVENPORT** knows what it’s like to have a child in the hospital. Her son, now a young adult, spent weeks at the Children’s Center throughout childhood. Today, Davenport volunteers at the hospital, teaching patients and parents to crochet—a hobby she took up at her son’s bedside—to give back for the care her son and family received here. “Learning a skill like crochet helps give kids control in an environment in which they have so little. Their faces light



up when I stop by with my bag of yarns. It’s an opportunity for them to make some-

thing for their nurse, family or friends. I’ve watched kids crochet, pausing only to push their morphine pumps to ease their pain. Crocheting gave me, as a parent, some sense of control. You hope it’s a good outcome for your child, but you don’t know, so you work to keep yourself busy, focused on something else.” Davenport also co-leads with Child Life Specialist Annie Woods Beatson a monthly “Art Safari” TV show and serves on the hospital’s Pediatric Family Advisory Council. ■



Lab technician and sculptor Devin Mack.

## Sculpting Joy

**NEONATOLOGY LAB** technician Devin Mack teaches wire sculpting to patients monthly in the hospital’s Julia Clayton Baker Great Room. Hearing that Child Life wanted to expand its art program, he volunteered last year to be a visiting artist. A sculptor for more than 12 years, Mack is never far from the thin coils of metal and alloy from which he fashions jewelry, animals or trees for patients. “My technique with the kids is very simple,” says Mack, whose artistic repertoire includes a 10-foot stainless steel and brass honey bee for Baltimore Honey, a collective of bee keepers in Maryland, and a six-foot-long neuron for the neuromuscular division at Johns Hopkins. “I give each a

small bundle of prepared wire, then it’s bend, twist, divide into a shape. They get really absorbed in what they’re making.”

Brought to the lab in 2004 by neonatologist Frances Northington, impressed by his attention to detail in his artwork, Mack recently followed this same methodology to create an aluminum octopus in a hospital corridor. “My sculpting career has been good to me,” says Mack, who works in the lab four days a week as part of research team working to reduce brain injury in newborns, and the other days in his Drawn Metal studio. “I was in a position to give back a little, and I love seeing the joy it brings to the kids.” ■

## Lead Pet Therapy

**AS A FORMER NURSE** in the adult cardiac care unit at Johns Hopkins, Anne Efron has experience helping to amend hearts. Today, a project administrator for the Center for AIDS Research at Johns Hopkins, Efron has enlisted a fellow volunteer, Grendel, to spread some heartfelt joy among Johns Hopkins’ youngest patients. Grendel is a 150-pound American mastiff who comes with his own tennis balls for fetch. Efron and Grendel visit pediatric oncology and psychiatry patients monthly. Grendel has the true pedigree of a hospital volunteer. His father, Diesel, is also a therapy dog. “It’s in the genes,” says Efron, of her

personable pet that aced his therapy pet tryout in 2014 “with flying colors.”

Earlier, at the 125th Anniversary Celebration for Johns Hopkins, she had met Stephanie Cooper Greenberg, who trains and evaluates the pet therapy teams that now visit. Greenberg, who says she is always looking for “recruits for our dog ministry,” encouraged Efron to put Grendel through the training paces and have him certified. “The visits by dogs like Grendel help children and their families relax, forget where they are for a while and take heart in the delight of canine visitors,” says Efron. “I’m still a nurse at heart, so our visits let



Anne Efron and Grendel make a new friend in a playroom.

me continue the bedside care I love.”

National Capital Therapy Dogs, Inc., and the Pet Partners Therapy Animal Program have been sending dog teams to Johns Hopkins since 1998.

The Pet Therapy program is expanding throughout the hospital and needs more teams. ■

For more information, contact Jan Jaskulski, [jjaskul@jhmi.edu](mailto:jjaskul@jhmi.edu).



## Play in Friendship



Peabody musicians at the Children's Center.

**WHEN THEY PERFORM** monthly in Hopkins Children's lobby, Peabody musicians can't see most of their young audience, but they know many are listening to the music streamed into hospital rooms above. It's a "very powerful experience to perform for an audience that is going through so much just out of your view," says Jessica Korotkin, a Peabody student and site coordinator for Johns Hopkins Peabody Conservatory's Creative Access program. The volunteers might perform on a viola, violin and renaissance harp one month,

and a flute and two cellos the next. Music by Bach is a favorite, says Korotkin, given that it is "both complex and beautiful, and much of it doesn't require piano."

A student outreach program, Creative Access was launched at the Peabody in 2004 to create new opportunities to perform and share music with diverse audiences. "Performing for the children at Johns Hopkins is a favorite activity," Korotkin adds. "We want to make their lives a little better and play for them out of friendship with hope for a safe return home." ■

## Make a Difference

**CHILD LIFE IS** "like oxygen" for the youngsters where Rosemary Connolly volunteers every Wednesday. "The happiness factor on the unit is palpable when the Child Life specialist is around," says Connolly. "Play and attention are two of the greatest balms for these children."

A volunteer on the Infant and Toddler Unit since 2013, Connolly describes Child Life's focus on the developmental and emotional wellbeing of patients, as "a wonderful ancillary way to help heal body and mind that brings to mind the power of integrated medicine." Child Life briefs her on the patients who need a visit or a change of scenery. The children appreciate visitors, Connolly adds, especially when their parents are away or working. Staff

are "just wonderful with the children, and care for them as though they were their own," she continues.

Noting a number of recalcitrant eaters on the unit, Connolly drew on experience in feeding her own children, and wrote letters to a manufacturer requesting little airplane-shaped spoons that make eating more fun. The spoons arrived a few weeks later. "Now, THAT," she says, "was a lesson in what anyone can do to make a difference, even a little one, in the life of a child here." ■

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Interested in becoming a volunteer at the Johns Hopkins Children's Center? Visit <http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/volunteer-services> or call 410-955-5924.



On the Infant and Toddler Unit, volunteer Rosemary Connolly.