Saint Luke’s Foundation is proud to announce John H. Helzberg, MD, as the 2020 Foundation Fellow. The Foundation Fellow Award recognizes individuals who have given time, expertise, and charitable support to advance research, education, and medical programs at Saint Luke’s.

Dr. Helzberg has served as the Saint Luke’s Marion H. Bloch Endowed Chair in Gastroenterology and Medicine for the last 12 years. This endowed chair is made possible by generous support from the Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation. Dr. Helzberg also serves as a clinical professor at University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine, on Saint Luke’s Hospital Board, and on the Saint Luke’s Marion Bloch Neuroscience Institute Advisory Council.

Dr. Helzberg has been a physician in gastroenterology at Saint Luke’s Hospital since 1987 and has been the section chief of the gastroenterology division for 26 years. His areas of special interest include clinical liver disease, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, endoscopy, colonoscopy, and chronic hepatitis. Patients know and respect him as a compassionate physician with an exceptional bedside manner and a delightful sense of humor.

As a trust advisor for the Auerbach Hirsch Fund at Menorah Heritage Foundation, Dr. Helzberg has helped secure hundreds of thousands of dollars to benefit charity care at Saint Luke’s. Dr. Helzberg and his wife, Reesa, also personally support charity care in addition to medical education programs at Saint Luke’s.

The Saint Luke’s Foundation is honored to include Dr. Helzberg among our highly esteemed fellows.
Dear Friends,

Winston Churchill said it best, “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

When you give to Saint Luke’s, gratitude shines through every patient who experiences the remarkable difference philanthropy makes at the intersection of innovation and hope.

Picture a mother of two diagnosed with breast cancer for the second time. She walks into Saint Luke’s Hospital Koontz Center for Advanced Breast Cancer, where she will receive comprehensive care specific to her needs. Imagine how thankful she is for the Koontz Center, which is the only advanced breast cancer treatment center in the region. This is the intersection of innovation and hope.

Imagine having a heart too weak to pump blood through your body, leaving you short of breath and exhausted. Now picture a minimally invasive procedure at Saint Luke’s Mid America Heart Institute where a small device, implanted into your heart, gives you back the quality of life you deserve within days. This is the intersection of innovation and hope.

Envision having dinner with a loved one when suddenly she starts to slur her words and then falls to the floor. She is rushed to Saint Luke’s Marion Bloch Neuroscience Institute where she receives life-changing stroke reversal treatment. Prepared for the worst, you walk into her hospital room the next day, and she tells you “Good morning,” with a clear, strong voice. This is the intersection of innovation and hope.

The best part of my job is introducing donors to creative medical innovations and solutions that change lives. Through Saint Luke’s medical programs, clinical research, and health care education, supporters like you help generate hope for thousands of patients every day.

Philanthropy lives at the intersection of innovation and hope, so for our patients’ well-being at this challenging time, I ask that you continue to partner with Saint Luke’s.

With gratitude,

Michael K. VanDerhoef
Chief Executive Officer, Saint Luke’s Foundation
Senior Vice President of Development,
Saint Luke’s Health System

NEW DATE
Books and Boutiques
Monday, September 14
Overland Park
Convention Center
More than 300 people celebrated the 40th anniversary of Saint Luke's Hospital The Children’s SPOT in February at School Night Out for Spot, a party for grown-ups who are really kids at heart. Thanks to friends of The Children’s SPOT, this event raised more than $190,000 to support the Guardian Angel Fund at Saint Luke’s Foundation.

The Children’s SPOT opened its doors to 10 children with developmental delays in 1980. Today, the organization helps more than 800 children a year with a variety of screenings, evaluations, and therapies that allow them to learn, play, and live to their fullest abilities.

If you’d care to donate to The Children’s SPOT, it’s not too late to become a guardian angel. You can give monthly or make a one-time gift. Your stable and consistent support will help meet the therapeutic needs of our area’s most vulnerable residents.

Make a gift at saintlukesgiving.org/SPOT.

This spring, Saint Luke’s Foundation is continuing the development of the Plaza Heights neighborhood. The project involves construction of 30 new single-family homes designed to revitalize the area just west of Saint Luke’s Hospital and south of Saint Luke’s Bishop Spencer Place, between 44th and 45th Streets.

“We’re a conscientious neighbor excited about attracting families and working professionals who will invest in and contribute to a neighborhood which has so much to offer,” said Michael VanDerhoef, CEO of Saint Luke’s Foundation. “We’re proud to offer new residential housing to home buyers in the metro.”

The Foundation added a real estate component to its operations in 1998 when it received a historic charitable gift of 93 area properties from the Miller Nichols Charitable Foundation and Miller Nichols Living Trust.

To learn more, visit plazaheights.com.
No one has ever made it through life without help from someone else. Saint Luke’s Hospital The Children’s SPOT guardian angels are those who volunteer their time, energy, and resources to ensure children with developmental delays reach their highest level of functional ability and succeed in the environments where they live, learn, and play.

Jason Wright, a local businessman, is a guardian angel for The Children’s SPOT.

In 2007, Jeanette Worthington, manager of The Children’s SPOT, invited Jason for a tour of the facility. There, he witnessed the remarkable work of a therapist helping a child with speech therapy. He also saw another therapist help a child develop functional mobility skills with the assistance of physical therapy. After that, Jason knew he had to get involved.

With a true passion for helping children, Jason served as president of The Children’s SPOT board for several years and he’s been a big part of the group’s success.

“This is a place where children who need help, get it,” Jason says. “When you see all the good the staff does you want to help them do even more.”

Rooted in faith, Jason’s notions of paying it forward are clear: when you give, you get much more in return.

“When you support The Children’s SPOT, you give children the opportunity to thrive. You give them the chance to live life to the fullest. You truly become their guardian angel,” he says.

To learn how you can create a lasting legacy by supporting Saint Luke’s care programs, such as The Children’s SPOT, please contact us at 816-932-2252 or visit saintlukeskc.org/giving.
Sam Devinki’s parents survived the Holocaust by hiding in a cellar for 27 months with the help of a man of faith from Poland. In 1946, Sam was born in a displaced persons camp in Regensburg, Germany. Sam’s family left Europe in 1950 and immigrated to Kansas City.

For Sam, Kansas City has always been home. In 2001, he was diagnosed with lung cancer. Because of a successful surgery at Saint Luke’s Hospital, Sam celebrated his 73rd birthday last year.

Sam’s Jewish faith motivated him to support the chaplain education program at Saint Luke’s. Chaplains take care of patients and families in crisis. This program allows laity, theological students, and clergy to serve alongside an interdisciplinary team of religious and medical professionals.

Since the 1970s, the clinical pastoral education program at Saint Luke’s has been educating pastoral students to serve as chaplains and helping students discover their professional capacity for effective pastoral relationships.

“I believe this chaplain education program is a huge benefit to Saint Luke’s and the community,” Sam said. “Faith has been such an important part of my history, and it has helped my family and me get through so much. I want to help make sure that same comfort and peace is available for others.”

Recently, Sam was appointed for his second term on the United States Holocaust Memorial Council. Sam is the only member from Missouri. The United States Holocaust Memorial Council was established by Congress in 1980 to lead the nation in commemorating the Holocaust and to raise private funds to build the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which opened in 1993.
In 2017, Mike Howe was diagnosed with cancer. After three operations and radiation treatment at a different health care facility, the relentless cancer kept coming back every three months. A close friend helped Mike get an appointment to see Janakiraman Subramanian, MD, at Saint Luke’s Cancer Institute. Mike quickly began immunotherapy infusions with a special cancer drug Keytruda that unleashes the body’s immune system to fight cancer cells. This same immunotherapy was used to treat former President Jimmy Carter.

While Keytruda is not typically used to fight Mike’s specific type of cancer, Dr. Subramanian recommended using it. Since undergoing treatment, Mike has experienced no major side effects. “I’m so thankful for this treatment,” Mike said.

“Dr. Subramanian gave me hope. He makes you feel like you are meant to be healthy and that he truly cares about you. The treatment and research that Dr. Subramanian is doing with me now will improve cancer care for patients in the future, and I’m proud to be a part of that.”

With a deep sense of gratitude, Mike and his wife, Peggy, honored Dr. Subramanian with a gift to support his work within Saint Luke’s Center for Precision Oncology.

“We are both so thankful for everyone at Saint Luke’s Cancer Institute for making our experience manageable,” Peggy said. “We are lucky to have such dedicated medical professionals on our side.”
Peter Gattermeir planted roots in Kansas City nearly 55 years ago. Over the years, Peter and his wife, Barbara, have invested in dozens of organizations where they felt they would make a difference. “Kansas City has been great to us, and now we are paying it back,” Peter said. Recently, the Gattermeirs decided to make a difference at Saint Luke’s Bishop Spencer Place by helping residents through innovative hearing technology.

The simple act of hearing empowers us to lead our lives without limitations. When a resident loses their ability to hear in a group, they run the risk of becoming isolated. When Peter observed residents at Bishop Spencer Place struggling to hear successfully, he knew he had to help. “Bishop Spencer Place staff are always kind, responsive, and they make everyone feel included,” Peter said. “I want to help with that for people who withdraw because they can’t hear.”

With Peter and Barbara’s support, Saint Luke’s was able to secure specialized easy-to-use headphones that enhance our residents’ ability to focus and engage in group programs as well as in one-on-one interactions.

The Gattermeirs believe it’s not about what one has or what one has accomplished that matters. Life is about lifting others up, making others better, and giving back. The Gattermeirs have not only lifted up Bishop Spencer Place residents, but they have made them better by giving them back the ability to communicate, connect, and socialize with the simple gift of hearing.
Gifts of Note

Saint Luke’s is grateful for broad support

We are thankful for donors who are dedicated to helping as many people as possible have the chance to live healthier lives. Following are recent gifts that support Saint Luke’s life-changing work.

Royals Charities, the charitable foundation of the Kansas City Royals, generously supported the exercise therapy room at Saint Luke’s Hospital Crittenton Children’s Center. The exercise therapy program at Crittenton serves adolescents within our intensive residential treatment program whose residential stays last more than five months. The new exercise therapy room includes new specialized rubber flooring as well as safe gym equipment that helps adolescents reduce their anxiety and battle depression.

The Kenneth L. and Eva S. Smith Foundation has been a loyal donor to Saint Luke’s for nearly 70 years, supporting groundbreaking cancer research as well as investing in quality medical education. Most recently, the foundation gave $25,000 that will help fuel new research at Saint Luke’s Cancer Institute.

Saint Luke’s Auxiliary made a $20,000 gift to support the launch of Saint Luke’s Heart Outcomes in Pregnancy Expectations (HOPE) Registry for Mom and Baby. The HOPE Registry will collect and study data needed to better understand maternal heart disease and improve outcomes for pregnant women and their babies.


Make a gift
816-932-2252
saintlukeskc.org/giving