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Rehabilitation **INSIGHT**

A publication of Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital

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Local Musician “Plays it Forward” for Other Stroke Patients

Two years ago, at 44 years old, Gregory Nash was living the life some people only dream about. A musician since the age of 14, Gregory was well-known on the local entertainment scene, playing drums with bands throughout the Capital Region and beyond. Often called a “musician’s musician,” Gregory was someone others in the musical world looked up to for his commitment, stand-out talent and unbelievable work ethic.

But on March 8, 2017, that dream turned into a nightmare. Upon waking, Gregory could tell something was wrong. While getting ready for work, he remembers blacking out several times, yet he still got into his car to drive into work, hitting a parked car along the way. Once at work, his coworkers thought he might have been drinking, even though he had been sober for 20 years. After some time, his boss

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 **Sunnyview Rehabilitation
Hospital**

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Rehabilitation Insight is a publication of Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital. The goal is to bring timely issues of acute medical rehabilitation, including updates and advances of the hospital and its foundation, to the forefront.

Welcome

Welcome to the 90th year of Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital!

What started in 1928 as a children's polio hospital and school has evolved into a nationally recognized comprehensive rehabilitation hospital. Today, more than 15,000 individuals from across the Capital Region and beyond, turn to Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital each year for clinically advanced inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services. Sunnyview has earned distinctions as Centers of Excellence for stroke, brain injury, spinal cord injury, cardiac, musculoskeletal, and pulmonary rehabilitation. In this issue of *Rehabilitation Insight*, you will read about our latest accolade: being named a Center of Robotic Excellence in rehabilitative medicine.

What has always set Sunnyview apart is the exceptional care provided by our staff. Our skilled staff continues to make the difference for our patients, not only with the most advanced technology and techniques, but with individualized one-on-one therapy. In our cover article you will read the inspiring story of drummer Gregory Nash who, through the perseverance of both he and his therapist, is now able to speak again after almost a year without words. In this issue you will also read about therapist Cono Cirrone, DPT, who was recognized for his patient care and commitment to growing his clinical skills with the 2017 Roberts Scholar Award. Thank you to all who have contributed to supporting our staff with equipment, facilities, and scholarships.

Our growth and success does not come without you: our friends and donors. I invite you to join us on September 21 at the River Stone Manor in Glenville, NY, for our **90th Celebration** in concert with **Art for the View**, our juried art show for artists with disabilities. I look forward to raising a toast with you.

As we look forward to the next 90 years, Sunnyview's future looks bright, thanks to our generous supporters like you.



Chip Eisenman
Chief Executive Officer



Address Change? Duplicate Mailings?

If your address has changed or if you receive more than one copy of our newsletter, please alert the Foundation office at (518) 382-4586 or sunnyviewfoundation@sphp.com so that we can streamline our database.

Thank you!



Left; Gregory Nash performs at the "Strokeversary" event.

Right; Sunnyview speech pathologist Jonathan Brendese, MS, CCC-SLP, CBIS, works with Gregory Nash.

Local Musician "Plays it Forward" for Other Stroke Patients

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brought him to St. Peter's Hospital emergency department. It was there that doctors determined that Gregory had experienced a severe stroke and suffered a traumatic brain injury. In addition to problems with movement in his right arm and hand, Gregory was unable to speak.

After a week at St. Peter's, Gregory spent another eight days as an inpatient at Sunnyview before starting outpatient therapy. With physical and occupational therapies, Gregory worked to regain function of his right arm and hand. But speech was another matter altogether.

"When I first met Gregory, he was unable to make any sound at all," remembers Jonathan Brendese, MS, CCC-SLP, CBIS, a speech/language pathologist and certified brain injury specialist. "He was the most severe case I had ever seen in my eight years in the field."

Although Jonathan doubted that Gregory would ever speak again, he wasn't going to give up that easily. "While we might not be miracle workers, we are agents of hope,"

continued Jonathan. "I was going to do everything I possibly could to help Gregory speak again."

Gregory suffers from aphasia, apraxia and dysarthria — the three main communication conditions after stroke. Aphasia is impairment in the ability to use or comprehend words. With apraxia of speech, the individual has trouble saying what he/she wants to say correctly and consistently. Dysarthria happens when a stroke causes weakness of the muscles used to speak, such as the tongue, lips or mouth. It can affect the pronunciation of speech sounds, the quality and loudness of the voice, and the ability to speak at a normal rate with normal intonation.

Jonathan, who coincidentally also enjoys playing the drums, searched for a sound Gregory might be able to make. As it turned out, it was the "M" sound, a bilabial consonant sound that is made with both lips. With determination and hard work — and the use of a mirror, visual cues and lots of repetition — Gregory said his first word since the stroke: "Mom".

Now, a year later, Gregory has come a long way although he still has trouble with some sounds. He continues therapy with Jonathan two or three times a week, and is working on his "R" sounds.

"Gregory is amazing, he's the hardest worker I've ever seen," added Jonathan. "He has never missed an appointment and is always on time!"

That fierce determination continues with his music. With his right arm and hand about 90 percent back to normal, Gregory has worked hard to regain his drumming skills and after months of patience and practice, he is playing again. In fact, in late March — a year after his musician pals played a benefit for him — Gregory played in another benefit, one he helped organize. Called *"One Stroke Roll: A Benefit for Sunnyview Stroke Victims, Celebrating Gregory Nash's One Year Strokeversary!"*, the event, held at The Hollow in Albany, attracted 175 family members, friends, and fans, and raised more than \$3,500 for Sunnyview's post-stroke program.

Jonathan wasn't surprised that Gregory wanted to give back to others. "Gregory's musical talent is phenomenal, his perseverance is unbelievable, but most of all, he's just a great human being."

Sunnyview's Robotic Technology Program Receives CORE Recognition

In February, Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital was recognized as a Center of Robotic Excellence (CORE) by Ekso Bionics (EKSO), the developer of a state-of-the-art, wearable robotic "gait trainer" exoskeleton.

According to Patricia Valenza, DPT, ATP, assistant director of Sunnyview's Neuro-Rehab Institute, "CORE designation recognizes rehabilitation centers that provide high quality, coordinated health care using state-of-the-art technology and innovation. CORE programs are committed to providing education to physicians and other health professionals, and are chosen for their commitment to measurable results in rehabilitation."

Sunnyview is the fourth rehabilitation center in the United States to receive CORE designation, and the fifth worldwide.

Sunnyview first introduced advanced robotic exoskeleton technology in May 2016 when it acquired the Ekso GT, the first robotic exoskeleton for use in the treatment of individuals with paralysis of one side of the body due to stroke, as well as those with spinal cord injury levels to the C7 vertebrae.

Originally developed for use in military and industrial settings, robotic exoskeletons have proven to be increasingly useful in the field of rehabilitation. The Ekso GT helps patients walk by retraining their brains, and at the same time, supporting correct posture and balance. The

exoskeleton provides adjustable amounts of power to either side of the body, assuring that patients are 'equal' on both sides. As a result, patients can take more 'quality' steps with less energy and get in more walking time during therapy sessions.

As a CORE program, Sunnyview can participate in EKSO robotic technology development, as well as multi-center research opportunities. In addition, Sunnyview has access to other CORE centers to develop and share protocols to improve patient mobility through use of exoskeleton technology.

Sunnyview has served as a leader in regional professional education on robotic technology. Recently, Erica Gauthier, BS, DPT, NCS, presented on robotic assisted technology at a conference in Pittsburgh, PA, which included a live demonstration of the Ekso GT.



Sunnyview patient Kim Zilm making strides using the EKSO with therapist Kathryn Greene, DPT.

Other CORE centers in the United States are: Marionjoy Rehabilitation Hospital, Wheaton, IL; Barrow Neurological Institute, Phoenix, AZ; and Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital, Allentown, PA. Villa Beretta Centro di Riabilitazione in Costa Masnaga, Italy is also a CORE program.

Roberts Scholar Award Winner

Congratulations to Cono Cirone, DPT, winner of the 2017 Richard E. Roberts Scholar Award. Cono completed the certification exam to become a Neuro Clinical Specialist. Having more certified Neuro Clinical Specialists is an important step for Sunnyview to attain a larger goal of establishing a Therapist Residency Program in the next few years. Cono is a highly regarded therapist and has been recognized in Sunnyview's Clinical Ladder as an Advanced Senior Clinician.



Standing l to r; Stephanie Roberts, Chris Roberts, Cono Cirone, DPT, (seated) Barbara Roberts.

Carlilian Foundation Makes Challenge Grant

Earlier this year, Sunnyview Foundation received a generous challenge grant that will help replace the hospital's wheelchair fleet. The Carlilian Foundation Challenge will provide up to \$20,000 — approximately one half the cost of the wheelchair project — and in turn, Sunnyview is tasked with raising the remaining funds from both individual and corporate donors.

"The role a wheelchair plays at Sunnyview is incredibly crucial to our patients' overall experience," noted Lynne Nicolson, MD, chief medical officer for Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital.

Dr. Nicolson explained that the hospital's wheelchairs receive a great deal of wear and tear since they are used by many patients throughout the year, most of whom are 'new drivers.' Additionally, the chairs are repeatedly cleaned for infection control. This pattern of use takes its toll on these critical pieces of medical equipment, necessitating frequent refurbishment and ultimately replacement.

"We are indeed grateful to the Carlilian Foundation for this challenge grant that will enable us to provide patients with wheelchairs that reflect Sunnyview's high standard of quality care and compassion."

The Carlilian Foundation is a private foundation established by the late businessman, community leader and philanthropist Charles W. Carl, Jr. Named for his mother, Lilian Carl,

it was created as a way for Mr. Carl and his family to give back to the community he so loved.

The Carl family, which owned the Carl Company department stores in Schenectady from 1906 to 1984, was instrumental in the development and growth of the Schenectady business community. Organizations such as Proctors Theatre, Ellis Hospital, United Way, the YMCA, and the Rose Garden Restoration Committee in Schenectady's historic Central Park have benefited greatly from the family's generosity.

If you would like to make a donation to Sunnyview in support of the Carlilian Foundation Challenge, please go to: givetosunnyview.org and click on the "Make a Donation" button, or contact the Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation at (518) 382-4586.



Sunnyview patient, Sammy Dallas Bayes, uses one of the new wheelchairs purchased with funds from the Carlilian Challenge.

Save the Date



Saratoga Race Course,
"At the Rail Pavilion", Saratoga Springs

Wednesday, July 25, 2018

Gates open at 11:30 am

Post time 1 pm



Art Show and 90th Anniversary

River Stone Manor, Schenectady

Friday, September 21, 2018

6 – 10 pm

You Can Make a Direct Impact on the Work at Sunnyview!

Each year, Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital identifies critical needs that will help fulfill our commitment to improving the lives of our patients and their families. These investments in care are important, but can strain our not-for-profit budget. The Sunnyview Foundation is committed to fulfilling these needs through the generosity of grateful patients, their families, and generous donors like you. Here are just some of the ways you can help.

Make a 90th Anniversary Gift **Any Dollar Amount**

In 2018, Sunnyview celebrates 90 years of improving rehabilitative medicine for our region. With advances in medicine and technology, and with the support of philanthropy, Sunnyview now provides care through six specialty centers of excellence in stroke, musculoskeletal, brain injury, spinal cord injury, cardiac and pulmonary care. Your support keeps Sunnyview at the forefront of care.

Keep THE Wellness Center Fit **\$500 - \$10,000 (\$25,000 total)**

With 1200 members and additional use from numerous patients, the Lifestyle Wellness Center and Golub Therapy Pool keep many people healthy and active. Help us keep our clients moving with new and upgraded equipment.

Bring Patients Some **Fresh Air Comfort** **\$250 - \$1,500 (\$15,000 total)**

Patients, families, staff, and volunteers have found the courtyard at our café a refreshing respite from the busy hospital. We are upgrading the outdoor furniture for the first time to increase comfort and accommodate multi-sized patient mobility devices. Come visit our beautiful outdoor oasis!

Expand Sunnyview's Reach **\$500 - \$10,000 (\$150,000 total)**

Sunnyview Outpatient Therapy Services continues to expand our scope of care beyond Schenectady, now with locations in Albany, Latham, Guilderland, and Glenville. Your gift can help us improve or upgrade therapy equipment and furniture in an office near you.

Train a Therapist or Nurse **\$700 - \$1,500 (\$30,000 total)**

Continuing advances in care and new technologies adopted at Sunnyview require continuous training and upgrading of skills. Put your resources toward advancing the skills of one of our talented clinicians. Your investment will impact patients for a lifetime.

Make Each Night's Sleep Safer **\$1,000 - \$8,000 (\$80,000 total)**

Sunnyview is investing in lower beds to allow restraint-free sleep on our brain injury unit and other nursing units. These beds lower to seven inches from the floor at night to prevent unnecessary falls replacing older high beds that require safety restraints. It is a safer and sounder night's sleep!

Recognize Great Caregivers **\$6,000 - \$10,000 (\$80,000 total)**

Patients and families regularly comment on the quality of our therapists and their sincere care. Sunnyview is recognizing our most advanced and talented therapists through our Clinical Ladder program. You can name an Advanced Senior Clinician or a Clinical Scholar with your gift.

Sponsor a Patient in Need **Any Dollar Amount** **(up to \$50,000 annually)**

Many Sunnyview patients don't have the income or the insurance to cover some of their therapies. Each year, Sunnyview makes up the difference to continue their care through outpatient services in Cardiopulmonary Services, Post-Stroke Group, Visual Arts Program and Recreation Therapy. The Patient Needs Fund has a direct impact on our patients' well-being.

Contribute Where Your Gift **is Needed Most** **Any Dollar Amount**

Each year, there are unforeseen needs that require immediate investment – technology upgrades, mandated safety equipment, or repairs to critical therapy technology. You can contribute whatever meets your budget, to help support our great patient care.

THANK YOU!

Sunnyview Welcomes Physiatrists



*L to r; Matthew Sonagere, DO,
and Douglas Fetkenhour, MD.*

In Fall 2017, Matthew Sonagere, DO, and Douglas Fetkenhour, MD, joined the team of physiatrists at Sunnyview. Dr. Sonagere comes to Sunnyview after serving as Chief Resident at Thomas Jefferson Hospital in Philadelphia, PA. He is board-eligible in physical medicine, and has a special interest in stroke and spinal cord rehabilitation.

His other interest includes enhancing patient transition through the continuum of care. Dr. Sonagere enjoys the educational aspects of patient care – giving patients and families information that empowers them to fully and actively participate in their rehabilitation process.

Dr. Fetkenhour is board-certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation, and specializes in amputee care and prosthetics and stroke and spasticity management. He is excited to have the privilege of being part of the team. Dr. Fetkenhour believes that seeing a patient get back home, and in some cases, back to work are the most rewarding parts of patient care.

Drs. Sonagere and Fetkenhour were both drawn to Sunnyview by its excellent reputation of quality care, with Dr. Sonagere adding, “the therapists, nurses, and staff are the best I have ever worked with.” Sunnyview’s physiatrists work with patients and families to develop an individualized treatment plan, with a goal to restore or maximize their functional skills, self-sufficiency and mobility.

Sunnyview is proud to have Dr. Sonagere and Dr. Fetkenhour join our expert rehabilitation team which works to provide the highest quality of patient care.

DID YOU KNOW ...

You could make a gift to Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation and receive a dependable cash flow for life regardless of what is happening in the market?

A Charitable Gift Annuity can provide an additional source of income for life for you, your spouse, or another person. You can even defer your payments if you don't need the income now!

In many cases, you can receive payments at a higher rate than what you are receiving through the bank or on your investments.

You can receive an immediate income tax deduction for a portion of your gift, and a portion of your annuity payment back to you will be tax free.

We are here to help! Please visit givetosunnyview.org or contact:

Kathie Ziobrowski
Director of Legacy Giving
Kathleen.Ziobrowski@sphp.com
(518) 525-1529



Mike O'Hara
Executive Director
Michael.D.Ohara@sphp.com
(518) 382-4586

Spikes Trikes Donates Recumbent Trike

When Bernie "Spike" Elwood was forced to retire due to a severe back injury, the former electrician read about a recumbent trike that might help him lose those extra pounds, get back into shape, and allow him to enjoy biking once again.

Since there were no local dealers, he ordered a Terra Trike online and it literally changed his life! In no time he was reaping the health benefits of exercise, losing weight, and enjoying his mobility. But even more than that, his new acquisition prompted him to start a new career!

In 2013, Spike and his wife, Darlene, opened up their own Terra Trike

dealership, Spikes Trikes, in Amsterdam. "We started out with only four trikes in our shop ... little did we know we would quickly become one of the top dealers in the country!"

Spike assembles the Terra Trikes in his shop, customizing them to meet the needs of each individual customer – short, medium or tall. He recently built one for a young 10-year-old with Cerebral Palsy.

In March, Spikes Trikes donated a \$1,200 recumbent trike with a stationary roller to Sunnyview for use by patients with a variety of disabling conditions. Sunnyview patients can ride the stationary trike in the indoor gym or outside in the warm weather.



Sunnyview stroke patient, Ken Bernson, tries out the new trike with direction from recreational therapist Jennifer Battle, CTRS.

Spike had heard about Sunnyview through his customer and friend, Kevin Harrison, a former patient. Both agree that the trikes have helped transform their lives, giving them independence and mobility ... not to mention a new social network of fellow trikers.