

Connections

A newsletter for donors and friends of

niagarahealth
— ECG — foundation



SPRING | 2023



Donors Joel and Lana

“It made sense to us to give back, so that it will help another family or another patient down the road.”

Joel Jodoin and his wife, Lana Duong, believe in the importance of donating and supporting causes they are passionate about. Most recently, they added the Niagara Health Foundation to the list of charities they support, and we chatted with them to find out why.

“Every year, you think about what causes you want to donate to,” explains Joel, who lives in Toronto but grew up in Niagara. “And I thought that in a perfect

world, people in Niagara should be able to access all healthcare services necessary in Niagara instead of having to go to Hamilton or Toronto. So I decided to return to my roots and provide more support for Niagara.

While my wife and I don’t currently live in Niagara, my family does, and I see my donations as a way of contributing to local healthcare that will be there when they need it. Much like it was there for my mom when she needed it.”

Joel’s mom Sharon collapsed on her 69th birthday in July 2021. The ambulance brought her to the St. Catharines Site, where the team began running tests to see what was happening. “That was the beginning of a time when we really started to lean on the services of Niagara Health,” Joel remembers and adds that his mom had to undergo many tests before they received the diagnosis: stage four lung cancer.

“Her Radiation Oncologist, Dr. Cuthbert, took the time to explain everything to us, and he explained it in layman’s terms, making sure we fully understood what was happening to my mom. Sadly, he told us early on that she would likely not be a candidate for chemo. He recommended palliative treatment for my mom instead but was still open to exploring every avenue with us. I really appreciated his demeanour. He shared all the facts with us without getting caught up in our emotions, which was what we needed.” To manage Sharon’s pain, Dr. Cuthbert recommended radiation treatment. “She was in so much pain at that point,” remembers Joel. “She was sleeping all the time because of the medication to mitigate the pain.”

Once her treatment started, Sharon felt she was in good hands at the Walker Family Cancer Centre. **“Whether it was the volunteers who greeted her when she would come in, the people who would**

help her to get around throughout the hospital, the nurses who worked with Dr. Cuthbert – they were all phenomenal. The volunteers would always joke with her and lighten her load with their kindness. When her treatment ended, she even brought them all Tim Hortons gift cards. The nurses were amazing to my mom but also incredibly good to us. We could call with our questions and concerns at any time, which was helpful and reassuring.”



The most important thing of all? It worked. Sharon and her family knew they wouldn't have much time left together, but the time they did get was as good as it could possibly be, thanks to the treatment she received. "As soon as the treatment started, she was in substantially less pain," explains Joel, "which meant we could enjoy the time we had left with her. Whether it was watching movies or doing something else fun she wanted to do... all of that was only possible because of the treatment she received. **I honestly couldn't imagine what it would have been like for her, for us, if she had not received that treatment.** Lana and I actually got engaged during that time," Joel shares with a smile. "We didn't get married while my mom

was still here, but she got to enjoy that incredible moment with us – she even helped pick out the ring!"

Joel and his wife Lana are grateful for the time they had with Sharon before she passed away. "Seeing the impact for my mother-in-law and how much the team supported her and us during that whole process – it made sense to us to give back to that, just so that it will help another family or another patient down the road," says Lana about their reasons for donating to the Niagara Health Foundation. "My uncle in Toronto actually caught COVID in 2021," she adds, "and at the time there were a lot of people in the Toronto area who had COVID and were overwhelming the hospitals." Due to the lack of beds, Lana's uncle was sent to the Intensive Care Unit at the St. Catharines Site. "He was extremely sick and our family had a bit of a scare," she remembers. "Thankfully, he made a miraculous recovery, and was transferred to the Welland Site, where he continued his recovery." The care he received at Niagara Health for close to two months is another reason for Lana and Joel to support the Niagara Health Foundation. **"Our family was extremely grateful for the doctors and the care he received during that time. Niagara Health saved his life."**

Joel and Lana know that one donation may not change everything, but hope that their gift will get Niagara just that little bit closer to being self-sufficient in terms of healthcare: "Sooner or later, as a Niagara resident, you will need their services. It's unfortunate that our lightbulb went off on Niagara Health Foundation after we needed it."

On December 4, 2021, Joel's mom Sharon passed away peacefully at her home. **"You always wish you had more time, but the time we did get was very, very valuable."**



Grateful patient Doug

**“It may not be much,
but I believe we each
need to do our part.”**

If you had asked Douglas (Doug) Todd about his health a year ago, he would have told you that he’s the healthiest guy on the planet. Doug was that neighbour who not only shovelled his driveway, but would help others dig their way out of winter without hesitation. “I am an archaeologist; I love to dig,” Doug explained with a smile. “But when I was dying in the driveway on that day in May 2022, it hit me that maybe I wasn’t as healthy as I thought.”

May 13th started as a normal day for Doug. “I was working from home, and I got a call about something cool a crew found who happened to be digging in the area. When work asked me to come out to identify the tool they had come across, I didn’t think twice. I went to the store and got some water and chocolate bars for everybody. I had to ride my bike to pick up my car from the shop. I had to throw the bike in the car, drive home, and get ready to get out the door. It was a bit hectic but nothing out of the ordinary for me. As I was getting ready to leave, I started to sweat, and I couldn’t get the key in the lock. It was the strangest thing. I kept trying to get the key in the lock, but my hand just couldn’t stay steady. By then, I knew I was in trouble.”

What happened next is not something you hear every day. “The only thing in my head was ‘go to the hospital!’ It wasn’t ‘take an aspirin and call 911,’ it was ‘drive to the hospital.’” So he did. “I got behind the wheel, and that four-minute drive felt like an hour and a half.”

“When I walked through that door, I thought I was dying. My chest felt like it was going to explode.” In the Welland Site Emergency Triage Room, Doug was quickly surrounded by doctors and nurses. **“Mr. Todd, you’re having a heart attack,”** one of the voices told him. **“You’re in good hands.”**

Doug's heart had a 100% blockage on one side and a 95% blockage on the other. A first stent was put in right away; a second one was inserted during surgery at the St. Catharines Site a few weeks later. "I came to the edge that day," remembers Doug. "And in a moment when I was faced with my own mortality, I was just so incredibly grateful for the team at Niagara Health. Everybody was so awesome. The nurses and the doctors... they told me exactly what was happening, which was so important because I had no idea. Every person involved in my care made sure to put my mind at ease. They were professional, educated me, filled in the gaps. I was never left guessing. It was reassuring, and it made me feel like I could breathe and trust that I would be okay."

Thankfully, Doug is okay today. While the experience has taken a physical and emotional toll on him, he is grateful that he got to live. **"To show my gratitude, I decided to make a donation to the Niagara Health**

Foundation. It may not be much, but I believe we each need to do our part. If everybody made a small donation, that would be a lot of money and will make a difference. I think helping each other out is part of our DNA as Canadians and as humans. The health system is something you take for granted until something happens to you. I've always been aware that it's important to have a local hospital, and now that I've needed it and gone through it, I'm just that much more appreciative." It won't be Doug's last gift to the Niagara Health Foundation.

"I'm very grateful for everything Niagara Health did for me, so I plan to continue giving. **We all need our local hospitals. You're either visiting somebody who needs the services and equipment and expertise, or you're going to be there yourself. It's an important part of the community.**"

Lifesaving equipment – thanks to you!

Thanks to our amazing donors, Niagara Health Foundation has supported the purchase of nine Transportation Ventilators to be used across Niagara Health. These are used to assist patients with breathing. The Ventilators accompany the patient to any destination either within or outside of the hospital, while in ambulance, during water rescue or air transport. This state-of-the-art ventilation technology can be used on all types of patients.

Designed for mobility and convenience, this piece of equipment will empower Niagara Health staff to safely transport critical patients when necessary.

-Thank you Niagara!



15
YEARS

The Big Move

cancer ride™



Every September since 2008, hundreds of cyclists take to the roads of Niagara in support of the Walker Family Cancer Centre at Niagara Health. Riders can tackle 25km, 50km, 75km routes or the 12km Family Ride.

The Big Move Cancer Ride has raised more than **\$5 million** for local cancer care and is one of Niagara's most anticipated events. Riders collect pledges and take pride knowing that every kilometre they ride and every dollar they raise helps to improve cancer care close to home.

The Walker Family Cancer Centre continues to expand its scope of services and types of cancers it can treat thanks to the equipment that has been funded by proceeds from the Big Move Cancer Ride.

Over the next few months, we look forward to sharing incredible stories from the past 15 years on our website and social media.

The 2023 Big Move Cancer Ride will take place on September 10th at White Meadow Farms. To learn more, register, donate, volunteer or sponsor, scan the QR code to the right or visit our website at BigMoveCancerRide.com.



MONTHLY DONORS MAKE IT POSSIBLE



**BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR AT
[NIAGARAHEALTHFOUNDATION.COM/MONTHLY](https://NiagaraHealthFoundation.com/Monthly)**

Leave a Legacy

**I care about my family.
I also care about local healthcare.
You don't have to choose.**

Remembering Niagara Health Foundation in your Will is an act that is generous, powerful, and surprisingly simple. A legacy gift allows you to leave a larger gift than possible during your lifetime while still taking care of your family and heirs.

For more information about leaving a legacy gift, please visit NiagaraHealthFoundation.com/Legacy



Community Champions



Thank you, Port Colborne Hospital Auxiliary!

We are incredibly thankful for a \$15,000 gift we just received from the wonderful team of volunteers at the Port Colborne Hospital Auxiliary. They have 10 active members who volunteer their time to keep the Port Colborne Site's gift shop open every afternoon. The money, which was raised through the gift shop proceeds and the sale of Nevada tickets, will go towards purchasing a new Shower Lift Chair. Thank you, Nancy and everyone at the Port Colborne Auxiliary for your volunteerism and philanthropy!



Calendars for Cancer

We are so grateful to the Niagara Falls Firefighters Association for hosting their Calendars for Cancer campaign in support of the Walker Family Cancer Centre. The 2023 calendar, featuring local firefighters, raised an incredible \$13,000 for local cancer care by selling calendars at fire stations, Foundation offices and several pop-up locations. We want to thank everyone on the team who helped make this year's campaign such a success and all who supported the campaign by purchasing a calendar.



Niagara Health Foundation Vendor Program

We are thrilled to announce that the Vendor Partner Program has returned to the St. Catharines Site. Niagara Health Foundation offers independent businesses the opportunity to display and sell their products on-site at the St. Catharines Site. The program consists of a dedicated network of vendors from across Ontario who sell a wide variety of products such as clothing, jewellery, hand-made goods and mobile accessories. It is great to have these small businesses back at the hospital. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a vendor, please contact vendor@niagarahealth.on.ca.

Community Fundraisers

Seeing how the community continues to step up for our local hospitals fills us with a lot of gratitude at the Foundation. Here are some of the wonderful events that will take place over the next few months to support excellent healthcare here in Niagara. If you would like to participate in any of these events or organize a fundraiser of your own, please get in touch with our team member Lisa at Lisa.Branston@niagarahealth.on.ca.



GIVE & GROW PROGRAM

Gardening season is almost here! By using code "NIAGARAHF23" on bigyellowbag.com, you will save \$5 on every bag of soil or mulch that is purchased, and \$10 will be donated back to the Niagara Health Foundation.



MINIT AUTO CARDIAC CAMPAIGN

Proceeds from every oil change will be donated to cardiac care at Niagara Health. If you make a donation on top of that, Minit Auto Tirecraft will be matching it dollar for dollar to reach their fundraising goal.



NIAGARA GOLF MARATHON

On June 26th, at Peninsula Lakes Golf Club, golfers will challenge themselves by playing 100 holes in one day while supporting charities across Niagara. Visit NiagaraGolfMarathon.ca to learn more and to support a local golfer.

Upcoming Events

Welland Jackfish Strikeout Cancer Campaign

All season long
Welland Jackfish Baseball Club
\$5 will be donated to the Niagara Health Foundation for every Jackfish strikeout

Kids Ultimate Challenge

June 10th, 2023
Burgoyne Woods
In support of the Children's Health Unit

Fight Prostate Cancer Golf Tournament

June 10th, 2023
Rockway Glen Golf Course
In support of the Walker Family Cancer Centre

Niagara Peninsula Dental Association Golf Tournament

June 16th, 2023
Legends on the Niagara Golf Course
In support of oral cancer care

Niagara Cycling Marathon

July 17th, 2023
120km route across scenic Niagara
In support of urgent equipment needs



About The Site



The new South Niagara Site will be located at the intersection of Biggar Road and Montrose Road in Niagara Falls, just off the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW).

The building will stand 12 storeys tall and will be 1.3 million square feet.

By The Numbers



74% increase
in MRI diagnostic capacity



More Beds
469 new private beds increasing regional capacity by 156



12 additional
hemodialysis stations



Accommodate 7,400
more annual visits for senior wellness



Accommodate 20,000
more emergency visits



Disclaimer: South Niagara Site images are artistic renderings and are subject to change.

More Information



The new site will offer a full scope of hospital services, and feature Centres of Excellence in Complex Care, Wellness in Aging, and Stroke.

The site will be the first WELL-certified hospital in Canada, incorporating design elements that promote health and well-being for everyone who uses it.

Latest Updates



We are thrilled to share that we have reached another milestone in bringing a new hospital to South Niagara. EllisDon Infrastructure Healthcare has been awarded a contract to design, build, finance and maintain the new South Niagara Site. We expect to see the first shovels in the ground this summer! Visit [ItsOurFuture.com](https://www.itsourfuture.com) to learn more.

Thank you for your generous support!

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