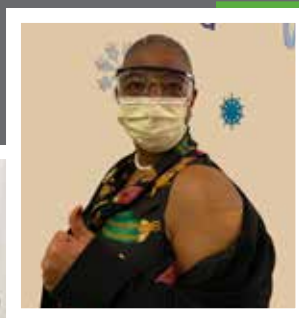




CREATING POSSIBILITIES

The newsletter of Elizabeth Seton Children's



COVID-19 VACCINE ARRIVES AT ELIZABETH SETON CHILDREN'S CENTER

Vaccinated health heroes at Elizabeth Seton Children's Center (from left to right): Lead Environmental Services Worker Alexander Kwarteng, Director of Child Life, Therapeutic Recreation and Volunteers Vanessa Andrews, Paola Ramirez, RN, Chief Nursing Officer Dorian Samuels and Jillian Coar, RN, with Elizabeth Seton Children's National Spokesperson Stephanie Gabaud.

"I think it's very important for everybody to get this vaccine and make sure that we're healthy and safe!" said Elizabeth Seton Children's National Spokesperson Stephanie Gabaud.

Stephanie, who was born with spina bifida, Arnold-Chiari malformation, hydrocephalus, neurogenic bladder and failure to thrive, has lived at Elizabeth Seton Children's Center for most of her life – beginning at just three months old. She has survived countless painful and often risky surgeries and beaten the odds time and time again. Now, at age 23, Stephanie is keenly aware of the

threat that COVID-19 poses to her and all the residents of the children's center.

That is why on January 4th Stephanie received her first dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine in partnership with Walgreens. She received her second, final dose of the vaccine series on January 25th. To date, a total of 39 eligible residents ages 16 and older, or 64 percent, have been vaccinated with parent/guardian consent, along with approximately 68 percent of children's center staff.

"We're thrilled we can finally start taking some positive steps toward

combating this dreaded virus," said Dr. Peter Tesler, Chief Medical Officer. "This is really one way for us to start going on offense instead of playing defense against coronavirus."

The heroes who work at the children's center echoed this sentiment. "I feel like I have to put my best foot forward and do whatever I can to protect all these kids; they can't protect themselves so somebody has to do it," said Jillian Coar, RN. Lead Environmental Services Worker Alexander Kwarteng shared, "I feel great. It protects my co-workers, the residents here and my family and the people I meet outside."

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Creating Possibilities gives Elizabeth Seton Children's the opportunity to communicate news and events from its family of non-profit organizations: Elizabeth Seton Children's Center, Elizabeth Seton Children's School and Elizabeth Seton Children's Rehabilitation Center.

If you know someone who would like to receive *Creating Possibilities* in their mailbox, or if you have ideas for future issues, please let us know by contacting Sarra McGinnis, Director of Communications, at (914) 226-3004 or emailing her at smcginnis@setonchildrens.org.

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Dear Friends,

I have said repeatedly how 2020 was the most challenging year in our organization's history. Yet, despite all our community has endured, our Elizabeth Seton Children's family has stuck together and endeavored to create opportunities for our children to live life to the fullest and thrive. This newsletter shares some of the highlights of how we stayed true to that mission.

The pandemic is nowhere near over. Every day at Elizabeth Seton Children's is a fight against a virulent disease to which our children are especially vulnerable. In 2020, we made it 300 days without a case of COVID-19 among our children at Elizabeth Seton Children's Center – an extraordinary feat and testament to the commitment and professionalism of our team members. Now, as we approach the one-year mark of the pandemic, we continue to take it one day at a time in order to stay laser-focused on the reason we are here and why our work is important. The children bring us hope and they inspire us to do our best every day in the spirit of our foundress, St. Elizabeth Seton.

We have needed your support this year more than any other year. And, just like every hero on our team, you have stepped up to keep our precious children safe from harm and given them a chance to reach their greatest potential. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you.

Sincerely,


Pat Tursi
CEO




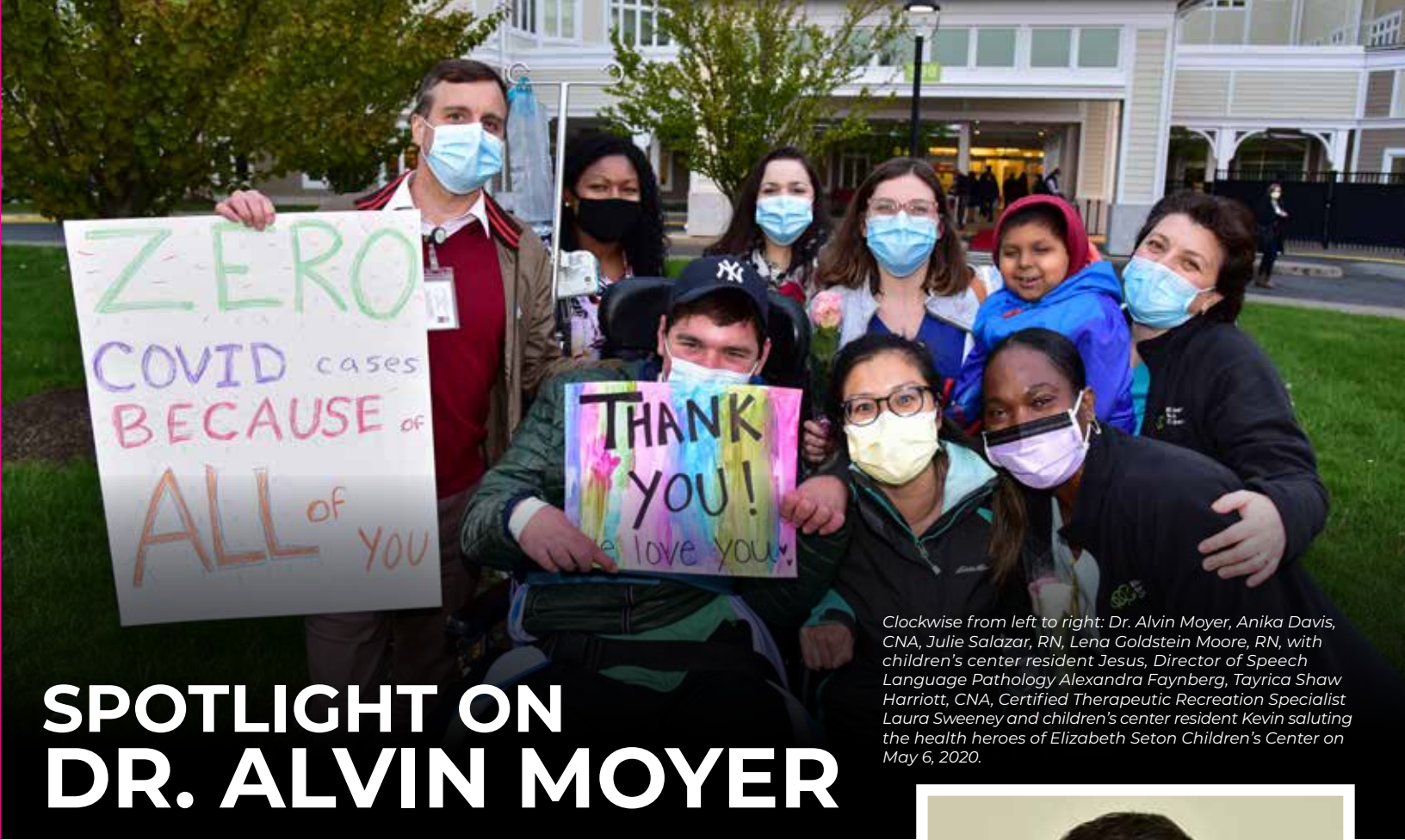
CEO Pat Tursi with Serge Joseph, RN, celebrating 100 days COVID-free at Elizabeth Seton Children's Center on June 8, 2020.

CONTINUED FROM COVER

The children's center implemented a strict regimen of precautions in early March 2020 in order to provide the safest environment possible for its residents with life-limiting conditions and compromised respiratory systems (62 percent of children have tracheostomies and 46 percent require ventilator support). Due to this extensive planning and ongoing preparedness, as well as the diligence and sacrifice of more than 700 devoted staff members, the children's center has been remarkably successful at keeping its vulnerable

children safe during the pandemic. In fact, all residents remained COVID-free for 300 consecutive days until the end of December and, as of this writing, all 169 children remain healthy.

Many staff members were brimming with optimism as they waited to receive their vaccine. "It feels like the light at the end of the tunnel is finally visible," said Jennifer Walpole, a speech language pathologist. "You feel hopeful." 



Clockwise from left to right: Dr. Alvin Moyer, Anika Davis, CNA, Julie Salazar, RN, Lena Goldstein Moore, RN, with children's center resident Jesus, Director of Speech Language Pathology Alexandra Faynberg, Tayrica Shaw Harriott, CNA, Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist Laura Sweeney and children's center resident Kevin saluting the health heroes of Elizabeth Seton Children's Center on May 6, 2020.

SPOTLIGHT ON DR. ALVIN MOYER

As COVID-19 took its hold in March 2020, Interim Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Alvin Moyer, shepherded Elizabeth Seton Children's through the darkness toward the light. His actions were nothing short of heroic.


"He is the type of leader that 'walks the walk,'" said Carolyn Ryan, Vice President of Quality. "Throughout COVID, he's taken on any and every task necessary to make sure that our children and staff stayed safe," Carolyn explained, such as implementing clinical and employee policies based on changing data and regulations, collaborating with the interdisciplinary team, as well as local and New York State health experts to increase understanding of the virus and deftly adapting to emerging best practices in infection prevention. Another notable accomplishment was the establishment of a specialized unit to cohort children who were potentially COVID-exposed to prevent any facility-wide spread. Additionally, Dr. Moyer spearheaded the implementation of the State-mandated twice weekly staff testing by working with the clinical, quality and leadership

teams to assure safe testing practices and a streamlined documentation system for contact tracing.

Newly appointed as Elizabeth Seton Children's Center's Director of Palliative Care and Related Clinical Services, Dr. Moyer displays a love, sensitivity and humility beyond compare. One of his strongest gifts is the ability to balance medical care with advocacy for quality of life. "It is a special person who can deliver difficult, life-and-death news with the ability to support and soothe," said Vanessa Andrews, Director of Child Life, Therapeutic Recreation and Volunteers. "He understands each family's unique perspective, situation and culture and ensures this is taken into account delivering compassionate family-centered and trauma-informed care."

Dr. Moyer's nimbleness, decisiveness and deep affection for the children's center's residents, their families and his frontline colleagues resulted in the Elizabeth Seton Children's Christmas miracle of 2020: all 169 children remained COVID-free for



300 days. Dr. Moyer's achievements were recognized with Elizabeth Seton Children's Servant Leadership Mission Award, given in honor of Vice Chairperson of the Board of Directors Sr. Carol Barnes, SC, in January 2021. As CEO Pat Tursi presented the award, she described Dr. Moyer as a trusted leader, devoted advocate and passionate pediatrician. "Standing on the shoulders of giants – the Sisters of Charity of New York – and keeping our mission flame ignited over 10 arduous months, there is no one more deserving," she said. 



RENDERINGS OF PLANNED YOUNG ADULT CENTER REVEALED

Elizabeth Seton Children’s has unveiled renderings from architecture firm e4h for its groundbreaking new young adult center – the first of its kind in the nation – for young adults living with severe medical complexities.

The \$84.8 million transformational project, which will be constructed by Whiting-Turner, will be a lifetime home for 72 residents who need highly specialized, 24/7 care and the most advanced medical technologies available. It will also serve as a model for caring for the complex medical conditions of young adults nationwide.

“Building the young adult center is a necessity for our Elizabeth Seton Children’s community and beyond. Our residents and their families deserve the peace of mind of knowing that, when they age out of our children’s center, they have options that can meet their needs and allow them to thrive in an age-appropriate environment filled with love,” said Pat Tursi, CEO.

Pediatric placement terminates at age 21 and, for most, aging out means having to be transferred to a geriatric nursing facility that is not equipped to handle the specialty medical, social or emotional needs of these young adults.

“We are truly blessed that our children are living longer than ever – a testament to the dedication of our health heroes and the advents of modern medical technology,” said Pat. “However, our health care system has not caught up to meet the needs of this growing population. Our young adult center is how we aim to change that. By 2023, 50 children’s center residents will move into this new home.”

The release of the renderings simultaneously spotlights Elizabeth Seton Children’s urgent \$30 million Capital Campaign to build the new facility. So far, nearly \$4 million has been raised. 

To support this project or learn more, please contact Brian Harrington, Senior Vice President of Advancement, at bharrington@setonchildrens.org or call (914) 260-3751. You can also scan the QR code on this page to make a donation directly to the Elizabeth Seton Young Adult Center.





“ We are truly blessed that our children are living longer than ever – a testament to the dedication of our health heroes and the advents of modern medical technology. ”

—Pat Tursi





Why I Give: **THE CAIOLA FAMILY**

Philanthropy runs in the family for the Caiolas (pictured from left to right): Benny, Gianna and Michele.

Years ago, when Benny Caiola heard that his tenants at 317 North Street in White Plains, Elizabeth Seton Children's School and Elizabeth Seton Children's Rehabilitation Center, were struggling financially, the real estate developer decided to help. "The more we saw what they did, we felt we had to get involved," he said of the special education and rehabilitative services provided to the children with complex medical needs. "They do an unbelievable job with the kids."

Eventually, after developing a solid relationship with Elizabeth Seton Children's, Caiola's partnership, North Street Community, donated the campus to Elizabeth Seton Children's. "It's a good feeling to help," he continued. While Benny devoted time to helping with building issues, his wife, Michele, began soliciting donations and organizing for fundraisers and other special events. "Giving makes us feel useful," said Michele. "We try to bring others on tours and to events so more people will

know about the important work being done here. If each person tells one more person, it can make a big difference," she said.

When Elizabeth Seton Children's Center relocated from Manhattan to a newly built, state-of-the-art, long-term care center in Yonkers in 2012, Benny joined Elizabeth Seton Children's Foundation's Board of Directors. The couple's daughter, Gianna, made championing the needs of Elizabeth Seton Children's a family affair by later joining its Events Committee and co-chairing Elizabeth Seton Children's Young Professionals Committee.

In 2019, Elizabeth Seton Children's approached the Caiola Family with an opportunity to sponsor a one-of-a-kind garden on their Yonkers campus in memory of Benny's mother, Bettina (a passionate gardener)



Architect Craig Studer (left) and Vice President of Engineering and Facilities Paul Mackey with the design of the "Harmony Garden" during 2020's Donor Gratitude Reception.

“ The more we saw what they did, we felt we had to get involved. ”

—Benny Caiola

and Michele's father, Joe (a landscaper). The Larchmont-based couple – parents of four themselves – eagerly agreed to fund the multi-use art and music therapy space that will also provide an outdoor visitation area for families. “The plans are amazing,” said Michele. “I've always been impressed by how such a big building can feel like a home and now I'm excited to see how the new outside space will marry with the interior.”

Dubbed the “Harmony Garden” by Michele and Gianna, and designed by architect Craig Studer, the 4,000-square-foot outdoor space will feature a butterfly garden, as well as sculptures, a pergola and unique installments like a weaving loom, easels and musical instruments that will provide opportunities for creative expression and sensory experiences for residents and their siblings. The “Harmony Garden” is slated to open in time for Mother's Day 2021. 🦋



Michele was honored with the St. Elizabeth Seton Legacy Award during 2017's Cherish the Child Luncheon.



Elizabeth
Seton
Children's

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SAVE THE DATES



VIRTUAL
Cherish the Child
FUNDRAISER



Shannon O'Neill Gallagher
& Franco D'Alessandro
Event Co-Chairs

Thursday, May 6, 2021
5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Bella Notte

Vito R. Verni
St. Elizabeth Seton Legacy Award

Marc & Corrinne Rosa
Champion for Children Award

Thursday, October 21, 2021
Glen Island Harbour Club