GEORGE MARK CHILDREN’S HOUSE focuses on quality of life and continuity of care for children with illnesses that modern medicine cannot yet cure, and for those who have complex chronic medical conditions. The goal of pediatric palliative care is to relieve the symptoms, discomfort, and emotional stress of illnesses for children and their families.
OUR MISSION
To provide the highest quality of care and to minimize discomfort, addressing the physical, emotional, spiritual, and psychosocial needs of the entire family.

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Barry Slivinsky, President
William Gisvold, Treasurer
Shawna Kovacs, Secretary
Michelle Lynn Berolzheimer
Mike Brown
Reggie Cooks
Audrey Foster-Barber, MD
Kendall Glynn
Kathy Hull, MA, Psy.D
Robin Matlock
MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO
SHEKINAH ELIASSEN

Dear George Mark Community,

It was a very special moment, in September 2022, to stand at our newly designed, Hummingbird Hill, beside Kathy Hull and Linda Ashcraft Hudak, our retiring CEO. I felt so honored to be handed the torch from Linda to step in and carry forward the incredible mission and legacy that she and the George Mark community have built. I am also touched every day by the fact that I have the privilege of carrying on the legacy of our first son, Lars, who died in 2012 here at George Mark.

The 2021-2022 year for George Mark, was a year of reemerging after the pandemic and landing on solid footing. One of the highlights of the year was an innovation called the Nursing Education, Training, and Employment Initiative, which focused on recruiting, training and retaining nurses so we could better accommodate our waiting list and serve our patients at full capacity. This creative concept was imagined in Spring 2022 and launched in August 2022. The clinical team hired an incredible nurse educator to recruit and train new RN grads to George Mark for 90+ days of bedside mentoring. This program has been a large success and is one of the significant factors in allowing us to hire the nurses we needed such that we could fully open our doors to more families every day.

I would also like to thank the extended George Mark community for the support over this year. We are all part of a village in service to our patients and our families. The George Mark
“George Mark serves the whole family. We delight in this every single day.”

village includes our volunteers, nurses, MDs, psychosocial team, administrative staff, housekeepers, food service providers, Board members and, of course, our loyal community of donors. Each one of you makes a lasting impact on the George Mark family, and we are grateful for you. I have met many of you, and for those I have not yet met, I very much look forward to doing so. I hope you enjoy reading this Annual Report as much as we’ve enjoyed sharing our progress this past year.

Warmly,
Shekinah
Writing my letter for our annual report is always an incentive to pause and reflect on both the milestones and challenges of the last year at George Mark. We have had a remarkably active course in the recent past, marked by the retirement of our CEO of seven years, Linda Ashcraft Hudak. Linda so capably helped us navigate the myriad of trials presented by the pandemic, the most significant being the well-being of our medically fragile patients. With much vigilance, and adherence to stringent safety protocols, we were able to remain open and continue to provide the lovely, exceptional care that sustains our families.

In October 2022, we enthusiastically welcomed our new CEO, Shekinah Eliassen. The Eliassen family first came to George Mark in 2012 with their infant son, Lars. Her return to this leadership role is highly positive for both her and all of us who benefit from her wealth of business experience and collaborative, engaging manner.

Fall also saw us hosting three parties in our attractive new therapeutic garden, Hummingbird Hill. The spirit of the gatherings was captured by author Barbara Kingsolver’s words: “Thanks for this day, for all birds safe in their nests, for whatever there is... for life.” Our staff and volunteers were delighted to welcome friends of George Mark back after three long years, to enjoy warm camaraderie, dinner in the garden, and lively entertainment. The parties were an opportunity to reconnect in a way that was safe and acknowledged the sense of caution that we all experienced, tiptoeing out of our sequestered lives.

As our vision for GMCH plays forward, we will mark our 20th anniversary in 2024. This milestone will be celebrated with pride, poignancy, and enormous gratitude. Michelle
“We learned about humility and gratitude – that so many people had a hand in our success.”

—Michelle Obama

Obama mused about their experience representing the country: “We learned about humility and gratitude – that so many people had a hand in our success.” At George Mark, we are ever mindful of the broad scope of generosity that has ensured that GMCH will continue to thrive – into our 20th year and for decades to come. We know that what makes the care of our young patients extraordinary is the support of the greater community: sharing time, talent, and resources. In closing, I borrow from the wisdom of Indigenous Peoples to “Give thanks for unknown blessings already on their way.” We are ever appreciative.

Fondly,
Kathy Hull
OUR SERVICES

Celebrating and improving the lives of medically fragile children and their families at George Mark Children’s House.

RESPITE CARE
Children bask in attentive medical care and playful activities while their parents, siblings, and other family members enjoy a break from the nonstop care routines at home.

CANCER CARE SUPPORT 💕
George Mark provides new respite care for children and young adults with cancer. Thanks to generous donors, we can offer constant medical attention and joyful experiences to these individuals.
TRANSITIONAL CARE
Staying at George Mark with their children after a discharge from an acute care hospital, families are taught how to continue to improve their children’s health and comfort.

END OF LIFE CARE
Patients’ families stay close to their children, in their own family suite, so they can surround their child with love and support. Our palliative care team offers compassionate care to each family member.

BEREAVEMENT CARE
Long-term support is provided prior to, and following the death of a child. The support includes individual counseling and memory honoring activities such as the opportunity to design a tile for the George Mark tile wall.

PERINATAL COUNSELING
We offer expertise, resources, and support to families with at-risk preterm births. Education is provided about the prognosis and potential complications, establishing continuity of care for infants and parents.
HOUSE HIGHLIGHTS
IN 2022 WE PROVIDED:

- **24 Hour Specialized Nursing Care**
- **25,560 Hours of Nursing Care**
- **1,664 Hours of Psychosocial Support**
354 Hours
OF PALLIATIVE AQUATIC THERAPY

240 Hours
OF PET THERAPY

219 Hours
OF MUSIC THERAPY

7,900 Hours
OF DEDICATED SERVICE
BY VOLUNTEERS

175 VOLUNTEERS
THE GMCH TEAM

“I always wanted to be a world changer, even if it’s one person at a time. Being an RN at George Mark has helped me achieve my goal.”

-Deanna, RN

60 Staff
30 Nurses
19 Clinical and Program Support
11 Administrative Staff
### FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT
#### FISCAL YEAR 2021-22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>FY21-22</th>
<th>FY20-21</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>REVENUE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
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<td>Events</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL DONATIONS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>OTHER INCOME</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL REVENUE &amp; DONATIONS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>EXPENSES</strong></td>
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<td>Program Services</td>
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<td><strong>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</strong></td>
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#### SUPPORT AND REVENUE
- Donations 82%
- Program Services 13%
- Other Income 1%
- Events 4%

#### EXPENSE ALLOCATIONS
- Program Services 73%
- Fundraising 11%
- Administration 16%
SERVICE IMPACT

197 ADMISSIONS

WHERE OUR FAMILIES LIVE

78% Bay Area

22% come from elsewhere in California

100% of families would highly recommend GMCH to other families who have children with life-limiting illness

98% of families gave GMCH the highest rating for medical care

POPULATION SERVED

86 Patients

300 Family Members

AGES

- 0-3: 40%
- 4-12: 28%
- 13-17: 11%
- 18 and above: 21%

ETHNICITY

- African American: 8%
- Asian: 8%
- White: 45%
- Latino: 26%
- Other: 13%

DAYS OF CARE 1,372

AVERAGE DAILY CENSUS 3.8
The George Mark Children's House Art Room was renamed in 2022 in memory of Jonah Timothy Cantwell. Jonah stayed with his parents, Amanda and Tim, in 2018 when they received end of life care at the House. Deeply moved by their experience, Amanda and Tim decided to help us launch an endowment for the Child Life Program, whose staff had supported their family and enabled them to treasure the short time that they had with their son.

Jonah’s family expressed their gratitude for the excellent care and unparalleled compassion that they received in the following letter:

“The minute we got to the House, it felt like a home where we could spend precious time loving our son.”

“We had a full range of experiences with Jonah. We created memories and we learned from him. If we had not had that time together, it would be a lot harder to talk about him at all.”

“The memories we have from George Mark House made it easier to talk about Jonah with our other children, who never got to meet their older brother. Because of the beautiful legacy pieces we created through the Child Life Program, we have physical touchpoints that act as a connection to him.”

Amanda and Tim decided to help us launch an endowment for the Child Life Program. Child Life staff had supported their family and enabled them to treasure the short time that they had with their son.

Amanda Del Balso Cantwell
“The minute we got to the House, it felt like a home where we could spend precious time loving our son.”

For more information about the Jonah Cantwell Memorial Endowment, and other endowed funds, contact Ken Sommer at 510-346-1269.

Scan the QR code to make a donation.
IN OUR FAMILIES’ WORDS

“Because of respite care for Annie, I can be the mother I want to be.”
-Nicole, Mom to Annie

“I wasn’t sure that it was the right decision to leave Callie until I came back and picked her up. It was an absolute godsend because she was so well looked after and so happy.”
- Aisling, Mom to Callie
“On Ukiah’s birthday and the anniversary of his death, my husband, our daughter, and I come to George Mark and feel even closer to him.”

- Tylia, Mom to Ukiah

“As soon as we walked in the door, we were able to breathe. It really is our saving grace.”

- Kausha, Mom to Christian
Dr. Joan Fisher, the Medical Director of George Mark Children’s House from 2015 to 2023, is a highly respected physician and a prominent advocate for pediatric palliative care. With a stellar academic background and specialized training in pediatric hematology, oncology, and bone marrow transplant, Dr. Fisher is at the forefront of advancing palliative care for children.

As Medical Director of George Mark and a Clinician and Professor at Stanford University, Dr. Fisher provides exceptional care to children and adolescents with cancer and other illnesses. Her commitment to integrating compassionate palliative care principles into pediatric practice sets her apart, emphasizing the importance of support from the beginning of a child's health care journey.

Kathy Hull, the Founder of George Mark, remarks, “Joan has been such a wonderful addition to the staff at George Mark — Sharing her professional training, her sensitivity in working with our children and families always with great care and love.”

WEST COAST PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE SUMMIT

Driven by her passion for the field of pediatric palliative care, Dr. Fisher's efforts at George Mark extended to designing the first West Coast Pediatric Palliative Care (PEDPC) Summit. This event became a vital platform for health care professionals to collaborate and share knowledge, benefiting children and families throughout the region.
Linda Ashcraft Hudak, George Mark CEO from 2015 to 2022 emphasizes, "Through her expertise and network, she orchestrated a two-day Summit that offered continuing education for nurses and other professionals. Joan's achievement sets a high bar for other institutions."

"WHERE'S MY CHOCOLATE?"

Beyond her substantial professional contributions, Joan Fisher's lighter side is also well-known. Kathy Hull fondly comments, "Her wry sense of humor is always a lovely addition to our meetings." Director of Nursing Salina Patel reveals that Joan actively engages with children in the playroom, picking up toys, and participating in activities. This playful side showcases her nurturing nature. Salina further adds, "In moments of stress, Joan would return to her office and ask, 'Where's my chocolate?' It seems chocolate is her remedy for everything."

A REMARKABLE COLLEAGUE

Dr. Joan Fisher's giving spirit, unwavering commitment, and dedication to improving the lives of children makes her a highly regarded collaborator. George Mark's new CEO Shekinah Eliassen expresses gratitude, stating, "Joan has been an immense support to me as I assumed my role at George Mark. Her guidance, constant availability for consultation, and willingness to bounce-off ideas have been invaluable to our entire team."

Reflecting on their close bond, Salina regards Dr. Fisher as a mentor and a true friend.
After the long hiatus caused by the pandemic, patients, families, and partners at GMCH were filled with delight as they returned to attend events at the House.

From a highly engaging Pediatric Palliative Care Summit, Corporate Volunteer Work Day, Star Wars Day, the solemn Service of Remembrance, celebrations of personal milestones, and giving-back activities — each event is thoughtfully designed to cater to the unique needs and interests of the families and their participants. The joyous atmosphere and the sense of togetherness created a renewed sense of hope and optimism among attendees of these events. They served as heartwarming reunions that reminded everyone of the resilience and strength of the George Mark community.

RESILIENCE AND REUNIONS
REKINDLING GEORGE MARK CONNECTIONS
THE POWER OF GIVING

Thanks to the generous support of donors, community and corporate partners, George Mark experienced an exceptional year of fundraising. The collective efforts resulted in a substantial increase in funds raised, allowing George Mark to expand and enhance its services for seriously ill children and their families.

The success of this fundraising year is a testament to the incredible impact that can be achieved when communities come together for a noble common cause!

With much gratitude from our GMCH family to yours.