

# Inspire

FALL 2023

STORIES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

## Foundation Vice President Gains Deep Appreciation for Quality of Local Cardiac Care



*Kara Marchand (left) and her children, two months after her cardiac surgery.  
Photo credit: Kelly D Phillips Photography*

When Kara Marchand speaks about the quality of cardiac care in Regina's hospitals, she's speaking from first-hand experience. She's not only the vice president, finance and administration, with Hospitals of Regina Foundation, she's also someone who received life-saving care in our hospitals.

Kara's story begins in May of 2019 when, at only 45 years old, she required five bypasses to repair narrowed blood vessels leading to and from her heart.

"I had been feeling off for a while," Kara explains. "At first I thought it was the flu. But, on May 13th my condition deteriorated rapidly, to the point where I

became incoherent. My teenage son called an ambulance, which got me to the Regina General Hospital (RGH) just in time for my heart to stop."

A frantic six minutes of CPR was followed by a battery of tests in the intensive care unit, where the decision was made to send Kara for immediate surgery and treatment at RGH's Cardiac Care Unit, in the Mosaic Heart Centre.

"It wasn't a surprise to encounter heart problems," Kara admits. "My dad had a heart attack and a couple of his siblings also required cardiac care. We still don't know for certain if I actually had a heart attack, but the doctors told me that it was just a matter of time before I experienced one."

Kara spent the remainder of May in the hospital, where she gained a deeper appreciation for the work of our medical teams. Later in 2019 she had a defibrillator implanted. This is a device that sends an electric pulse or shock to the heart to restore a normal heartbeat, in the event her heart stops again.

"Everyone was fantastic," Kara says. "From my surgeon, Dr. Stephen Korkola, my cardiologist Dr. Payam Dehghani and all the staff, the level of care was incredible. I left with a new appreciation for how fortunate we are to have a facility

like the Mosaic Heart Centre in southern Saskatchewan."

Kara's experience may not have led directly to her joining the Foundation staff in July of 2022, but she's grateful for the opportunity to contribute directly to successful outcomes for others in southern Saskatchewan.

"I'm thankful to be part of this amazing team at Hospitals of Regina Foundation," Kara confides. "It's very rewarding to know your work creates such a positive impact in your community."

Today, in addition to her work at the Foundation, Kara is busy raising her two children and is thankful (personally and professionally) for the support of the Foundation's many donors, volunteers and other partners.

"We're so grateful to have Kara as a member of our team," says Dino Sophocleous, president and CEO of the Foundation. "In addition to her contributions leading our finance team, she's also living proof of the importance of supporting the highest quality cardiac care for the people of southern Saskatchewan."



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## Local Company Supports Pediatric Health Care in Regina's Hospitals



*Baby Wells is just one of thousands of children to receive outstanding care each year from our pediatric medical teams.*

**"We have a deep commitment to the children in southern Saskatchewan. We want them to have access to the highest quality of health care services, right here in our own backyard."**

Chad Walder, Co-CEO, Alliance Energy

In 1913, more than a century ago, Alliance Energy Limited began operations in Regina under the name Sun Electric Company Ltd. Over the years, the company has experienced several name changes and restructurings. Today, this locally owned and operated business has more than 100 employees and provides electrical services to customers across the province.

Alliance Energy has also been a long-term partner of Hospitals of Regina Foundation, helping the Foundation invest in our hospitals so patients can continue to receive the best local health care. In fact, Alliance Energy's long-standing and now retired CEO, Paul McLellan, was involved with our hospitals even before the Foundation was established in 1987. Paul served on Regina's first hospital fundraising committee, struck in 1984, which reached out to our community to raise money for much needed medical equipment.

Continuing with this long-standing tradition of partnering to support health care for our community, Alliance Energy generously committed \$100,000 to support the Foundation's investments in the priority needs of our pediatric programs. Regina is one of three pediatric centres of care, and the only one in southern Saskatchewan. Our pediatric programs help thousands of children, and their families, each year.

"Alliance Energy is a locally owned company; we have a deep commitment to the children in southern Saskatchewan. We want them to have access to the highest quality of health care services, right here in our own backyard." says Chad Waldner, Co-CEO, Alliance Energy. "Our long partnership with Hospitals of Regina Foundation allows us a great opportunity to support the best care possible, close to home."

"Providing our pediatric medical team with access to the best technology, equipment and education is a priority for the Foundation," says Lisa Green, senior vice president. "Partners like Alliance Energy demonstrate the generosity of the southern Saskatchewan community. Nothing we do happens without friends like them."





*Baby Kasper and his parents, Laurie Dimond and Kurtis Anderson*

## *Regina Family is Grateful for a* **Helping Hand from** **Regina's NICU**

Laurie Dimond and Kurtis Anderson didn't know much about our neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in the Rawlco Centre for Mother Baby Care, at Regina's General Hospital (RGH) before May 26, 2021. That's the day their son, Kasper, was delivered via c-section at RGH. The tiny infant, born at 27 weeks and weighing only 1lb 10oz, was quickly whisked away to begin life under the watchful eyes of the NICU medical team.

"The pregnancy was going smoothly until part-way through the second trimester," Laurie reveals. "That's when my blood pressure shot up and I developed a severe case of preeclampsia. At that point, the decision was made to admit me to the hospital. Kasper arrived eight days later."

With preeclampsia, the mother might have high blood pressure, high levels of protein in the urine that indicate kidney damage, or other signs of organ damage. Left untreated, preeclampsia can lead to serious - even fatal - complications for both mother and baby.

"We're a strong couple," says Kurtis. "That strength helped us to stay positive. But of course, we were worried. I mean Kasper was so small, but we also realized very quickly that we were in the best hands possible, in Regina's NICU."

And so began Kasper's 70-day stay at the NICU. Having been born so prematurely, Kasper's lungs were not yet fully developed and he needed help breathing. To help him breathe, Kasper was intubated, and later put on a

CPAP machine which provided continuous oxygen pressure through his nose. A small brain bleed was diagnosed but, fortunately, only required monitoring before it healed on its own. The remainder of Kasper's stay in our NICU was focused on helping him grow strong enough to go home with his parents.

*"No one wants their baby to end up there. But if they do, you're sure glad Regina has a world-class facility like that."*

Laurie Dimond

"We're so lucky to have a world-class facility like the NICU right here in Regina," Kurtis observes. "It's a relief not to have to travel to another city or province to ensure our babies get the help they need."

Despite a rocky start to his journey, today Kasper is a healthy, happy toddler who is approaching his second birthday.

"We're just so grateful to everyone connected with the NICU," Laurie states. "That includes the donors who support Hospitals of Regina Foundation. Their support provides our medical teams with the technology they need to save babies like my Kasper. Thank you!"

"It is so rewarding to play a role in success stories like Kasper's," says Lisa Green, senior vice president of Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "Stories like his remind us why it's so important to keep investing in the technology our NICU needs, to help children across southern Saskatchewan go on to lead healthy, happy lives."



## Shine On Foundation Supports Cancer Care in Regina's Hospitals



The *Shine On Foundation* was started in the fall of 2013 to honour and give forward the generosity that friends, family and community members showed Chantelle Desmarais and her family, during their battle against Chantelle's cancer.

For almost a decade, the *Shine On Foundation* had the opportunity to help more than 45 Saskatchewan families with once in a lifetime trips, medical expenses, and child care costs. In late 2022, *Shine On Foundation* founder, Blair Ledingham, made the difficult decision to cease operations and gifted Hospitals of Regina Foundation with \$100,000 in support of priority needs benefitting cancer care in southern Saskatchewan. This generous gift will be used to match donations from the community, in support of cancer care in our hospitals.

"Chantelle cared deeply about her family and those around her, and we believe that this donation will help build on her legacy of caring for others," says Blair. "Having volunteered with HRF in the past, I know the Foundation will honour the commitment to helping others upon which Shine On was originally founded. They will use our donation in the most impactful ways to ensure that those fighting a cancer



*Chantelle, Blair and their children on vacation*

diagnosis will get the best care available to them in Saskatchewan. As a family we were so blessed to receive such incredible support from our community," recalls Blair. "Chantelle would take comfort knowing that other families facing similar circumstances will also feel that support, helped in part by this donation."

Last year, almost 3,900 patients received cancer care at Pasqua Hospital through our Oncology Inpatient Unit, and Prostate and Breast Assessment Centres. On average, more than 5,600 people a year are diagnosed with cancer in Saskatchewan.

"Hospitals of Regina Foundation is honoured to have been selected to, in some small way, carry on the legacy of the *Shine On Foundation* by investing in cancer care in our hospitals", says Dino Sophocleous, president and CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "We believe patients dealing with cancer

should receive the best care possible, right here at home. The *Shine On Foundation's* willingness to match donations from our community, up to \$100,000, will allow us to invest in priority needs to help our health care teams continue to deliver the best cancer care possible to the people in southern Saskatchewan."

"Having volunteered with HRF in the past, I know the Foundation will honour the commitment to helping others upon which Shine On was originally founded. They will use our donation in the most impactful ways..."

Blair Ledingham

# There's No Place Like Home



*Lorie Lindsay, former morning show host at Z99*

A vacation is supposed to be a peaceful and carefree getaway for most, designed to allow people to recharge from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. The last thing most of us think about when on vacation is requiring health care while away. However it does happen, as Lorie Lindsay, former morning show host at Z99, found out while on a recent vacation to Phoenix, Arizona where one inattentive moment resulted in a severe outcome.

While taking a simple step off a patio, Lorie lost her footing, which sent her tumbling. The awkward way in which she fell, and the instant pain in her leg told Lorie that something was seriously wrong with her ankle.

“It was such a random, freak accident when I fell. The type of fall or slip that happens to so many people every day, but just the way my legs and ankle bent when I went down made it pretty bad.” Lorie explains. “When I fell, I immediately heard a snap and felt the pain. Then the swelling began almost instantly and I knew it was much worse than a typical sprain and that I needed medical attention.”

A visit to a local urgent care centre revealed that Lorie had broken three bones in her ankle, and suffered torn ligaments as well. The doctor informed her that it was a significant injury and that she would likely require surgery to fix the damage.

“As soon as I heard that I would require surgery I started making plans to get back home as quickly as I could.” Lorie tells us. “It was a significant procedure, so I wanted to be where I was most comfortable and felt like I would receive the best care. The medical teams in Regina are phenomenal, plus I also needed to be closer to my family and support network.”

After returning home, Lorie visited the Regina General Hospital for further assessment of her injury. It was confirmed that Lorie’s injury was extensive and the best course of action was indeed surgery to repair the broken bones and torn ligaments in her ankle. A treatment plan was then created and Lorie received her operation from orthopaedic surgeon, Dr. James Ardell, and his talented team at Regina’s General Hospital. Our surgical team was successful in repairing the damage, but Lorie was told her recovery would still take quite some time and require extensive physical rehabilitation.

“I’m extremely grateful to all the amazing medical staff that cared for me during my stay at the Regina General Hospital, and am very happy I flew home to receive my treatment here.” Lorie tells us. “I also want to thank Hospitals of Regina Foundation for their support of Regina’s hospitals. The Foundation’s support allows these medical teams access to the incredible equipment they need so they can help people receive the same amazing care that I was fortunate to receive.”



*X-ray image of Lorie's broken ankle*

## *Hospitals of Regina Foundation Supports Ground-breaking* **Work by Regina Dermatologist**

Dr. Rachel Asiniwasis is Canada's first Indigenous dermatologist. She's also on the leading edge of research into the root causes of, and potential solutions for, many skin problems plaguing Indigenous people in remote and northern communities, in Saskatchewan and across Canada. Support for her work includes a \$90,000 research grant from Hospitals of Regina Foundation, to provide a part-time research assistant for two years, to help Dr. Asiniwasis complete her research and publish the results, a crucial part of any research project.

Dr. Asiniwasis has been a practicing dermatologist, in her home town of Regina, since completing her residency at the University of Toronto in 2014. She recently completed her Masters degree in translational research, which is research aimed at producing direct benefits towards human health.

Dr. Asiniwasis' practice focusses on two main areas. Providing a wide variety of dermatology services to the general population of southern Saskatchewan, and offering remote clinics in northern and southern Saskatchewan in the form of virtual care/tele-dermatology, and in-person clinics with a focus on providing culturally safe care to Indigenous communities.

"That's where my research will bear the most fruit," Dr. Asiniwasis says. "In the past, skin diseases among Indigenous populations haven't been well documented at all. In addition, there are

travel barriers in providing specialized care for residents of these communities. Plus, there're the costs involved in getting proper skin care supplies to remote areas. Those costs are often out of the reach of ordinary people. It's a difficult situation."

Additionally, as Dr. Asiniwasis notes, there is occasionally a stigma around skin diseases, which many people consider far less serious than other ailments. "However, even a case of eczema, if left untreated, can lead to serious health issues, including chronic itching and pain."

Dr. Asiniwasis hopes her research will help identify common factors leading to skin disease among Indigenous populations, but also – and perhaps most importantly – start an essential conversation that has been lacking in the past. "We need to identify root causes and develop effective and affordable treatment plans. But before we can get there, we need to have open and honest discussions. That includes a multi-pronged approach, including members of the community at the same table as health care providers and researchers. That's where we'll make real progress."

"Hospitals of Regina is proud to support Dr. Asiniwasis' important work," says Dino Sophocleous, president and CEO Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "Her research will lead to solutions for a number of long-standing challenges surrounding skin diseases, especially in remote parts of the province. That aligns

with the Foundation's goal of ensuring everyone in southern Saskatchewan – not just those people living in larger centres – has access to the best possible health care."



*Dr. Rachel Asiniwasis*



**\$462,560** *Raised for Children's Health Care!*

**THANK YOU**



*Four Seasons Ball*

It was an elegant, magnificent evening. Thank you to Alliance Energy, our proud presenting sponsor, and all our sponsors, who helped make the 2023 Four Seasons Ball a tremendous success. Through the dedication of our sponsors, donors, supporters and volunteers – our community – the 2023 Four Seasons Ball raised \$462,560. This will help the Foundation in our funding of pediatric programs in Regina's hospitals, so children in southern Saskatchewan receive the care they need, as close to home as possible.

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The incredible generosity and community spirit of southern Saskatchewan were on full display at the 2023 Four Seasons Ball! Thank you to our wonderful sponsors, supporters, volunteers, and our community, for your support of our pediatric programs in southern Saskatchewan. It was truly a remarkable evening in support of children's health care.

## Celebrating *Our Community's Giving Spirit*



The giving spirit of the individuals, organizations and businesses that support Hospitals of Regina Foundation is outstanding. Time and time again, these caring and generous groups gather together to raise funds for Regina's hospitals in new and exciting ways! Whether a gala event, a donation at the till program, a golf tournament or a marathon, people step up and support health care for those who need it most. The Foundation is so grateful for our community's support because nothing we do happens without you.

### CONNECT

To learn how you can host your own fundraiser, visit our website [hrf.sk.ca/Events/Host-An-Event](http://hrf.sk.ca/Events/Host-An-Event), or contact Brianne Moore, development officer at 306-781-7501 or by email at [brianne.moore@hrf.sk.ca](mailto:brianne.moore@hrf.sk.ca).

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Thanks to many amazing volunteer organizers, here are some of the fundraising activities that took place between May and July 2023 in support of Hospitals of Regina Foundation:

- Cardiac Care Unit 5K Walk/Run - \$19,940
- Bigfoot 50 Trail Run - \$1,400
- Motorcycle Ride for the Boys - \$5,670

It is shaping up to be a busy fall and winter! Please join in the fun at these upcoming events! Follow our social media pages to keep up to date on how to get involved by purchasing tickets, or making pledges to those who are participating.

- De Haar Hair Restoration donation per client – September 2023
- GMS Queen City Marathon – September 8-10, 2023
- "On the Road to Recovery" Show & Shine Casual Cruise – September 10, 2023
- Regina Chamber of Commerce Bowling Networking event – October 25, 2023
- An Evening in Greece Gala – March 16, 2024



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