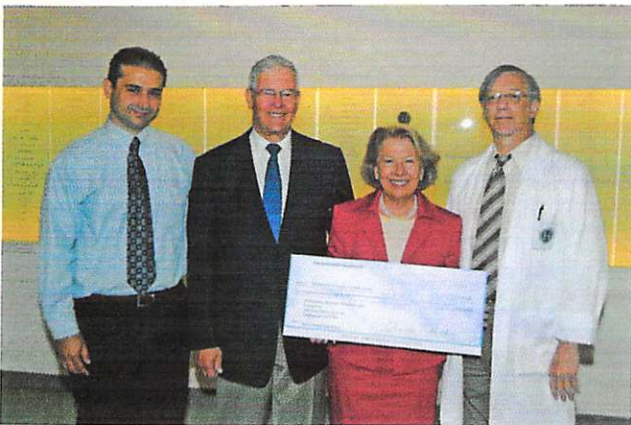


Medical Center's Heart Failure Fellow Program Launched by a Gift From the Shepherd Foundation

The Heart Failure program at Hackensack University Medical Center (HUMC) benefited from a commitment of \$500,000 made by Carol and Chuck Schaefer, trustees of the Shepherd Foundation, to launch the Heart Failure Fellowship Program.



Pictured from left: Wassim Fares, M.D., fellow of The Heart Failure Program at Hackensack University Medical Center; Chuck and Carol Schaefer, trustees of the Shepherd Foundation; and Robert Berkowitz, M.D., Ph.D., FACC, medical director of the Heart Failure and Pulmonary Hypertension Program at HUMC

The Heart Failure program is recognized as a leader in heart failure initiatives for its excellence in heart failure care, as cited in projects such as the Pursuing Perfection Initiatives, Premier Pay-for-Performance, and HealthGrades. It has received national recognition for its commitment to excellence. In recently released data

from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), HUMC was listed among institutions with the lowest 30-day mortality rate in heart failure in the country.

The Heart Failure program uses a multidisciplinary approach that has developed innovative ways to improve outcomes for heart failure patients. HUMC developed

the Heart Failure and Pulmonary Hypertension Program in response to an epidemic of heart failure in the United States. More than 5 million people in this country have been diagnosed with heart failure, and it is estimated that there will be 550,000 new cases this year. Heart failure is the only cardiovascular disease still on the rise. Although heart failure occurs in all age groups, it is more prevalent in patients over the age of 65. In fact, it is the most common admitting diagnosis for this population.

The Schaefer's motivation is derived from personal experience. Two years ago, Mr. Schaefer had bypass surgery in New York, and he decided to pursue his rehabilitation closer to home and family, which led him to HUMC. A conversation with a member of the HUMC Foundation board of trustees, Anthony C. Taccetta Jr., led the Schaefer's to Robert Berkowitz, M.D., Ph.D., FACC, medical director of the Heart Failure and Pulmonary Hypertension Program at HUMC.

"After meeting Dr. Berkowitz, we realized his intellect and dedication to his patients matched his compassion. He is an extraordinary physician who is creative and not bound by outdated

dogmas." Mr. Schaefer said. "My wife and I began to explore various opportunities where we could make a contribution that would also help make a difference."

"Remembering my father's death from heart failure 20 years ago, and then subsequently witnessing my husband's experience fueled the motivation to support the pioneering research of Dr. Berkowitz," Mrs. Schaefer said. "We agreed to support the hiring of Wassim Fares, M.D., who comes to us from the Cleveland Clinic, as the first fellow in this program. We are sponsoring fellows for a five-year period and are extremely privileged to join him in his efforts to advance cardiac care in heart failure patients."

"The generosity and tremendous support from Carol and Chuck Schaefer and the Shepherd Foundation establishes the legacy of a yearly fellowship in heart failure at HUMC," Dr. Berkowitz said. "We are extremely grateful to the Shepherd Foundation for providing our Heart Failure Program with this extraordinary opportunity to engage Dr. Fares, for the anticipated benefits in all of our clinical and research endeavors."