



A Family Affair



Written by Peter Barnicke.

For the Barnicke family, the way to make a difference in the community is to dedicate our time and energy to a place that has made a difference in our lives. Although St. Joseph's Health Centre has graciously named parts of our West Toronto hospital in honour of my family over the past generation, it is the stamp that the hospital has left on us and our community that inspires me to invest the lion's share of my time and philanthropy here. As a child in 1935, my father, Joseph J. Barnicke, was diagnosed with cancer, at age 12. He recovered fully and believed that the Sisters of St. Joseph, the nuns, "prayed his cancer away." He went on to generously repay that debt of care and compassion throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

We are now in a new era of renewal on many fronts in Parkdale High Park, and I am now stepping up to my own investment in the future health of our community. I do this with great pride: I joined the hospital's Foundation Board in 2005 and recently became Chair of its Major Gifts Committee. I am very fortunate that my parents instilled in me the tradition of giving back, and I look forward to passing that on to my children. I have also enjoyed inspiring others to join our Foundation Board and see the hospital into the future. Yet a legacy doesn't really begin in the past, with anyone else. It begins in the present, with us, with an understanding of what has gone before and a hope for the future.

In business, we invest in the critical mass—we invest to build on our strengths. Investing in St. Joseph's is smart business, in a family business like no other, when the business is our health. Following in my family's tradition, committing to our local Health Centre in a dedicated way over the long term so that it can build on its strengths, is bringing me enormous rewards. At this turning point in its history, the St. Joseph's Health Centre needs more family feeling than ever before, from more of us.

A special thanks to the Barnicke Family and [St. Joseph's Health Centre Foundation](#) for sharing their story, © CAGP 2009*