

The Gold Ribbon

From the desk of James Fahner, MD

July 2023

Dear Friends,

Happy Summer! It's the season of long days, vacations, and time with family and friends. I hope you are enjoying plenty of time in the sunshine!

The Ethie Haworth Children's Cancer Center has continued to evolve, and today, as I pen this letter to you, it is filled with excitement and opportunity! One of the biggest changes over the last several months is the "passing of the baton" to Dr. Beth Kurt, the new James Fahner, MD Endowed Division Chief of the Ethie Haworth Children's Cancer Center. Beth is a deeply talented physician and a bright light of compassion, warmth, humor, and leadership. She has hit the ground running and is the perfect person to lead the pediatric hematology/oncology team into the future with continued emphasis on providing world-class care for children and their families.

While Beth began her new role, I transitioned into my new role as the executive director of philanthropy for Helen DeVos Children's Hospital and Division Chief Emeritus. It is hard to find the right words to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you who have been incredibly invested in children's cancer care. The exceptional, compassionate care you help make possible every day is a direct reflection on you, your caring hearts, your loving support for the children and families entrusted to us—our guardian angels. Your words of encouragement have served me very well and I know that you will provide the same kindness to Beth, the EHCCC team, and the children and families in their care in the years ahead. For all you mean to us, and from our hearts, thank you!

Continued ...



A bell rings, and she is cancer free. Anni celebrates the end of a long journey with cancer.



To read Anni's full story,
scan the QR code.



As I pass the baton to Beth, the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital Foundation team will be working on developing new channels for information sharing for you and the many others who are incredibly supportive of children's health in West Michigan.

On behalf of all of us at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, thank you.

The exceptional, compassionate care you help make possible every day is a direct reflection on you, your caring hearts, your loving support for the children and families entrusted to us.

For all you mean to us, and from our hearts, thank you!

James Fahner, MD

Executive Director for Philanthropy
Division Chief Emeritus
Helen DeVos Children's Hospital

Dear Friends,

I am so appreciative of Dr. Fahner's warm introduction to this community of supporters that mean so much to our team! I am honored, grateful, and humbled to be named the James Fahner, MD Endowed Division Chief of the Ethie Haworth Children's Cancer Center.

While I am not native to Grand Rapids, it was easy to fall in love with West Michigan during my pediatrics and internal medicine residency at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital and Corewell Health's Butterworth Hospital. I completed my fellowship in pediatric hematology and oncology at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, and returned to West Michigan in 2008. My husband Jon and I cannot think of a better place to live and raise our teenage daughters, Libby and Reagan.

I am so fortunate to be surrounded by the incredible team of physicians, APPs, nurses, social workers, and child life specialists that you've heard so much about over the years. We could not do this work without your support. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to meet you in the months ahead.

With gratitude,

Beth Kurt, MD

James Fahner, MD Endowed Division Chief
Ethie Haworth Children's Cancer Center
Helen DeVos Children's Hospital





Two Fellowships and a Marriage

Alex and Ai are off to their next adventure!

It's been a very exciting year for two of our (philanthropically supported!) fellows at HDVCH! Dr. Alex Lake, senior fellow in pediatric hematology and oncology, and Dr. Ai Yamasaki, the Karl and Patti Betz Family Fellow in Pediatric Hospice and Palliative Medicine completed their time at HDVCH and in September 2022 became husband and wife. We wish Alex and Ai the very best as they prepare to begin post-fellowship specialty training at Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School. All of us at HDVCH are incredibly proud of their accomplishments here in West Michigan, which led to them receiving these prestigious positions. Now we will be finding ways to attract them back to West Michigan sometime in the future!



Record-Setting Fundraising by the Michigan Fraternal Order of Eagles



A little over a year ago, Dave Ross, newly elected president of the Michigan Fraternal Order of Eagles (FOE) came to us and shared that the Ethie Haworth Children's Cancer Center at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital would be his "President's Platform" for the 2022-2023 year. Dave stayed true to his word and worked tirelessly on behalf of our children and families, and in June we had an opportunity to join the FOE annual meeting in Lansing, where we were given the \$139,116.89 raised for Ethie Haworth Children's Cancer Center—breaking Michigan's FOE fundraising records! Additional funds will be collected to increase the final total raised. On behalf of our team and those we care for, thank you Dave and everyone who supported his efforts along the way.

Ethie Haworth Children's Cancer Center receives high honors from U.S. News & World Report

For the 12th year in a row, U.S. News & World Report has recognized Helen DeVos Children's Hospital as a top pediatric hospital. We are so proud that the Ethie Haworth Children's Cancer Center, for the 12th consecutive year, was ranked in the top 50 children's cancer programs in the country! This is a testament to our team's unwavering commitment to providing world-class care for children and families in our region,

Congratulations to our colleagues in pediatric neurology and neurosurgery, led by Dr. Angel Hernandez. This program has been ranked in the top 50 programs in the country for the fourth year in a row.

These achievements are made possible because of the collective efforts of everyone in the "big blue building" who partners with us to provide this nationally recognized care. We'd like to extend our gratitude to the teams in the emergency department, pediatric intensive care unit, the many subspecialists who help care for our complex patients, child and family life, for their pivotal contributions to this success. And thank YOU, our loyal and steadfast partners in philanthropy—you all are a vital part of our team!

Nationally ranked 12 years running

