

Focused On You

Spring 2025

Health News and Information from MedStar Montgomery Medical Center

Transforming cancer care, together

John D. Maylath, MD Oncology Pavilion



Emily Briton, president of MedStar Montgomery Medical Center (left), stands with Marian Maylath (right) in front of the new Oncology Pavilion named in honor of Marian's father, John D. Maylath, MD: a physician whose legacy of compassionate care helped shape the hospital's oncology services. Photo by Hilary Schwab

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Innovation meets compassion in our newest chapter.



At MedStar Montgomery Medical Center, every milestone we reach is built on a foundation of care, commitment, and community. And today, I'm excited to share the story of one of our most meaningful achievements: the opening of the John D. Maylath, MD Oncology Pavilion.

From my office window, I watched this pavilion take shape brick by brick, but its foundation was laid long before construction ever began. It started with a vision—a vision to create a space that reflects the warmth and excellence of our care teams, where patients feel supported, and families find comfort.

Bringing this vision to life took a remarkable group of people: our care teams, who understand the impact of compassionate, expert care; the project managers and designers, who worked tirelessly to make every detail count; and of course, the generosity of our donors, whose belief in our mission made this dream a reality.

People like the late Bobby Smith, whose gift—the largest in our hospital's history—helped make this pavilion possible. And our longtime partners at Sandy Spring Bank, who have supported our hospital's growth year after year. Their contributions remind us that healthcare is a shared effort, and we are stronger when we come together.

We are also incredibly grateful to Marian Maylath, whose unwavering dedication to honoring her father's legacy played a vital role in bringing this project to life. Her passion and commitment reflect the very heart

of our mission, ensuring that every patient receives compassionate, individualized care close to home.

What makes the Maylath Pavilion truly special isn't just the space itself; it's a promise within it to provide leading-edge cancer care right here in our community. To make sure no patient has to travel far to receive the best treatment possible. And to continue evolving, just as we've always done, to meet the needs of those we serve.

We're not stopping here. With plans already underway to renovate our emergency department, we're pushing forward with the same commitment that built this pavilion—innovating, growing, and always keeping our patients at the heart of everything we do.

In this issue, you'll meet some of the people behind these efforts—the patients whose journeys inspire us, the associates who bring their passion to work every day, and the innovations that are shaping the future of care at MedStar Montgomery.

Thank you for being part of our story. Together, we're making a difference. One step, one space, and one patient at a time.

Yours in good health,

Emily Briton

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Focused On You

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Serving our community through access to exceptional care and the latest medical advancements.



With restored mobility and confidence, Julio takes full advantage of the innovative technology and personalized recovery plan that guided his healing.

Photo by Hilary Schwab

Robotic knee surgery enables Julio to return to hiking, pain free.

By Ronna Borenstein

Julio Sosa's father passed down to him a strong work ethic, a love of the outdoors, and an increased risk for osteoarthritis of the knee.

Studies estimate that roughly 40% of this condition can be attributed to genes that influence the structure of cartilage in the knee joint and lead to the wear and tear that causes chronic pain.

"My job often takes me to the coffee plantations of Venezuela," says Julio, 73, an agricultural engineer.

"While I was willing to give up certain activities like tennis and soccer, it became very problematic when I could no longer walk pain free through hilly terrain."

After 10 years of unsuccessful medical interventions, Julio decided on a joint replacement. His primary care physician recommended Carter Mitchell, MD, director of Sports Medicine at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center and assistant professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at Georgetown University Medical Center.

"We felt that Julio was a good candidate for robotic surgery," says Dr. Mitchell. "The technology really shines for the more complex patient who has significant osteoarthritis, increased deformity of the leg, and more decreased range of motion."

Robotic orthopaedic surgery uses a computer-assisted, three-dimensional planning and guidance tool that allows surgeons to optimize the implant's fit. The technology offers a minimally invasive approach, often shortens recovery times, lessens pain, and increases the life of the joint. MedStar Health has one of the largest robotic orthopaedic programs on the East Coast.

"We use Mako's AccuStop™ technology, which enables us to plan and execute surgeries with remarkable precision," says Dr. Mitchell. "The robot guides the surgeon's cuts in the bone and complements his or her skills, but the surgeon is still completely in charge." The prosthesis is cement-less, meaning it grows into the bone for increased durability.



Julio's surgery, in October 2024, was performed under general anesthesia with a nerve block for post-operative pain relief. "The technology and the medication protocols eliminated much of my pain," he says. "This was a far different experience from what my father encountered back in the 1980s."

Following surgery, Julio completed three weeks of physical therapy in his apartment, and six more weeks of outpatient therapy on campus.

With his left knee now pain free, Julio plans to have surgery on his right knee in the spring—and looks forward to hiking Venezuela's hills once again.

As a part of the MedStar Health organization, we have 40 orthopaedic surgeons at 19 locations through Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia.

Visit [MedStarOrthopaedicInstitute.org](https://www.MedStarOrthopaedicInstitute.org) for a complete listing of physicians and locations.

How Zinnie got back on track **with her weight-loss goals.**



Years of yo-yo dieting behind her, Zinnie moves forward more active, confident, and grounded in her health journey than ever before. Photo by Hilary Schwab

By Ronna Borenstein

Like most people who try to lose weight, Zinnie Jones encountered many setbacks.

But she ultimately achieved success, thanks to the unwavering support of the multidisciplinary bariatric surgery team at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center. After losing more than 120 pounds, Zinnie is now one of the facilitators for the online MedStar Montgomery bariatric support group, inspiring others to reclaim their health and transform their lives.

"I went to [Dr. Brebbia's] office with two pages of questions and he answered every single one."

— Zinnie Jones

In 2018, at the age of 59, Zinnie was carrying 278 pounds on her 5 foot 1 inch frame. She was discouraged and disappointed that she could not participate in activities with her three young grandchildren. She was also battling several health threats related to her obesity, including prediabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea, sciatica, and an arrhythmia. By the time her friends referred her to John Brebbia, MD, who specializes in advanced laparoscopic and bariatric surgery, she was determined to turn her life around.

Dr. Brebbia recommended a sleeve gastrectomy—a procedure that reduces the size of the stomach by about 85% so that it can only hold six to eight

ounces of food. The stomach feels full sooner and the restricted food intake enables weight loss.

"Zinnie was a very good candidate for this surgery," says Dr. Brebbia. "This procedure was a good balance between the risks versus the benefits that it could provide to her based on her goals and medical conditions."

Zinnie lost 120 pounds in the year after the surgery—and then the COVID-19 pandemic hit. "Like everyone, I was under a lot of stress and over the next five years I regained about 40 pounds," she explains. "It's easy to fall back into bad eating habits. To keep the weight off, you need to be committed to changing your lifestyle. The mental work is very important."

To boost her efforts, Dr. Brebbia prescribed Zepbound®, a GLP-1 medication, which she used for about six months. More determined than ever, Zinnie got her weight down to her goal of 152, which she is now maintaining.



"First, the patient must be highly motivated and willing to persevere. At the same time, each person needs a tremendous amount of support, and that is why MedStar Health offers a comprehensive weight management program that empowers our patients and gets them back on track if they stumble.

"We are fully committed to helping our patients understand and prepare for this life-changing procedure," says Dr. Brebbia. "Professional dedication like this is why MedStar Health has achieved one of the highest bariatric success rates in the nation."

A team of gastroenterologists, endocrinologists, behavioral health specialists, nurses, and dietitians supplements checkups with the surgeon. But the online support groups are the secret sauce, facilitated by people who have been on the same path—people like Zinnie.

"I've definitely got my rhythm back," says Zinnie. "I'm healthier and happier, and guiding others through their weight-loss journey fills me with a deep sense of purpose."

Visit [MedStarHealth.org/Bariatric](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/Bariatric) for more information or call **301-774-8828**.

Classes and support groups.

Cancer support

Support Group for Cancer Survivors

This patient support group provides a safe place to share encouragement and receive information and guidance while discussing the unique challenges of living with a cancer diagnosis. Free. *Meets the first Friday of every month, noon to 1 p.m.*

Support Group for Caregivers

This group aims to provide both practical and emotional support to caregivers. We will explore ways to support your loved ones while practicing self-care. Learn about resources and ways to deal with the challenging and rewarding aspects of caregiving. Free. *Meets the second Friday of every month, noon to 1 p.m.*

Gentle Yoga

Yoga classes are tailored to meet cancer survivors' needs at all stages of treatment and recovery. Classes combine guided breathing exercises, slow stretches, and special yoga sequences to improve balance, strength, and flexibility. Free. *Wednesdays, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.*

To register for support or yoga classes, contact Samantha Falzoi at samantha.w.falzoi@medstar.net or call **301-570-7878**.



Childbirth and parenting classes

Complete Childbirth Prep (Hybrid)

A five- or six-week program to prepare you for a positive birth experience and postpartum journey. The program is designed to help you and your support team plan for labor and delivery, learn comfort measures and tips for infant feeding, and understand how to care for a newborn. Fee: **\$150**. *Meets 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Call for dates.*

Prepared Childbirth Express

This one-day, four-hour class will prepare you and your support team for your labor and birth experience. To enhance what you have learned, the Comfort Measures Class teaches practical techniques. Fee: **\$75**.

Comfort Measures Class

This class will explore the varied ways you can find comfort during labor and birth. Learn about all the tools you and your support team can use during labor and delivery, including but not limited to breathing patterns, position changes, and relaxation techniques. Fee: **\$60**.

Infant Care Class

This hands-on class will give you a complete look at how to care for your little one. The topics discussed include bathing, diapering, feeding, safety, and more. Fee: **\$35**.

Infant Feeding Class

This course is designed to offer an introduction to the basics of infant feeding. Mechanics/biology of breastfeeding, pumping, bottle feeding, and potential complications will be discussed. The lactation specialist will leave you feeling supported, confident, and capable

in your lactation journey and provide you with resources and access to a lactation support group. *Meets 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Call for dates.*

Groups and classes

NEW FREE Breastfeeding Support Group

Whether you're a first-time mom or expanding your family, our in-person Breastfeeding Support Group is here to empower you on your breastfeeding journey. We aim to provide a space for mothers to connect, share experiences, get personalized guidance, troubleshoot challenges, and receive evidence-based information to enhance breastfeeding confidence by an experienced lactation consultant. Weighted feeds, flange fittings available and light refreshments provided. Registration encouraged but drop ins welcome. Free. *Meets every Saturday, 1 to 2:30 p.m.*

Diabetes Self-Management Support Class

A group for people diagnosed with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes or those who have prediabetes. Learn about knowing and controlling your hemoglobin, A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol; glucose monitoring; medication management; and healthy nutrition. Virtual. Free. *Three-class series, 10 to 11 a.m.*

Senior Strength and Balance

Have fun, feel better, and get fit with this group exercise class. It is designed to help seniors 55 and older increase muscle strength, flexibility, and range of motion while maintaining cardiovascular health. Free. *Meets Wednesdays at 1 p.m. at the Mid-County Community Rec Center.*

Some classes are virtual. For full descriptions, or to learn more about dates and times, visit [MedStar Health.org/Classes](https://www.medstarhealth.org/classes), or call **301-774-8881**, option 4.





A striking view of the John D. Maylath, MD Oncology Pavilion, where compassionate cancer care meets state-of-the-art design. Photo by Hilary Schwab

Transforming cancer care, right here at home.

How the power of philanthropy made the John D. Maylath, MD Oncology Pavilion a reality.

By Karen Hansen

Jennifer Smith, vice president of Philanthropy at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center, knows the truth of this firsthand.

Working with a group of generous patients, staff, and community members, the MedStar Montgomery Philanthropy Committee helped guide the efforts that raised more than \$4 million to establish the John D. Maylath, MD Oncology Pavilion.

The project, which cost \$3 million, has already made a significant impact since its opening in November 2024, offering a full spectrum of cancer services—from screening to diagnosis and treatment to social and emotional support and more—all under one roof, and close to home. The additional funds will be used to continue making improvements to the Pavilion, ensuring that it remains a state-of-the-art facility for those in need of cancer care.

"What makes this project so meaningful is that the new addition created a beautiful, seamless connection—both visually and functionally," says Jennifer. "And it was made possible entirely through the generosity of our philanthropic community."

The full circle of giving

Dr. Bird came to Sandy Spring in the 1910s, he broke ground in 1918, and the hospital opened in

"The thing that I think is super special is that this cancer center was built entirely through philanthropy. This was really a labor of love from the community."

— Jennifer Smith

1920. A critical boost came in the form of a gift from Sandy Spring Bank. With this, what was then called Montgomery County General Hospital became the county's first acute care hospital.

Fast forward 100 years, as the philanthropy committee at MedStar Montgomery launched its Centennial Campaign to fund a new cancer center, just as another pandemic was once again threatening the health and safety of the community.

A major planned belated gift from Robert "Bobby" Smith, a lifelong Sandy Spring resident, spurred further momentum. Around the same time, Sandy Spring Bank—now Atlantic Union Bank—made another significant investment in the hospital's future. The donation was inspired by the deep, shared history between the bank and the hospital, their mutual commitment to the well-being of the local community, and the recognition that



Senator Craig Zucker (left), longtime MedStar Montgomery supporter Everett Hammond (center), and Luther Ampey, MD, Medical Director of Oncology Services (right), celebrate the opening of the Pavilion. Photo by Hilary Schwab

this support would meaningfully benefit everyone who depends on the hospital's care.

Paying it forward

For Everett Hammond of Colesville, Maryland, his own patient experience prompted him to give. Diagnosed with cancer in 2019, Everett was treated by Luther L. Ampey III, MD, medical director of oncology services at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center. Everett received what Dr. Ampey called "straightforward treatment for a straightforward oncologic problem," and has had no recurrence. But he was left with a lingering feeling that there was something he needed to do. "I'm a firm believer in paying it forward," he says. "This was a chance to leave a legacy for my community, and for my children, to help them understand that this life is also about giving."

Having begun his cancer journey before the new Pavilion was built, Everett understands how a soothing environment can help one manage a stressful life event like cancer. "I thought, at my age, how about helping somebody who just needs to feel like 'I'm in the right place'?" Soon thereafter, Everett found himself attending the opening ceremony of the John D. Maylath, MD Oncology Pavilion. It couldn't have felt more right. "You come into this beautiful Pavilion and you go, 'wow.' It feels so comfortable. And it was great to see what the money did."

Transformational care

Standing on the east side of the campus, the Pavilion is very prominent, "almost like a beacon," says Dr. Ampey. There is ample parking, and easy wayfinding thanks to clear signage and the helpful staff who welcome you as soon as you walk in. The new addition creates a seamless connection between the Helen P. Denit Center for Radiation Therapy, the Shirley A. Smith Infusion Center, and the Medical Oncology/Hematology Suite. Dr. Ampey also recognizes the profound impact a welcoming space can have on a patient's wellbeing.

For more information about the Oncology Pavilion, visit [MedStarHealth.org/OncologyPavilion](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/OncologyPavilion) or contact the philanthropy office at 301-774-8804.

"Yes, we use the highest medical standards and protocols to treat them. But the really human part is how we talk to patients, how we support them. For our oncology service, that's part of our 'compassionate care.' It's not transactional—it's transformational."

Continuing the legacy

The Pavilion's namesake, John D. Maylath, MD, certainly had a transformational impact on the MedStar Montgomery community. He first joined the urology department in 1965, and went on to become the hospital's first vice president of medical affairs from 1998 to 2003. During his tenure, the hospital launched many oncology services, which was uncommon for a community hospital back then. Dr. Maylath's daughter Marian describes her father as "a healer who believed that compassion and personal attention were key to providing excellent care. He worked tirelessly to ensure that our community hospital remained a place where family and friends take care of one another."



Marian Maylath.

Photo by Hilary Schwab

Marian has worked towards that herself. In 2022, her historic seven-figure gift enabled the John D. Maylath MD Oncology Pavilion to finally become a reality. Jennifer Smith is grateful for the "strong, active philanthropy committee that represents patients, community members, and people who work at the hospital. Coming together, we were able to close the Centennial

Campaign and make the Pavilion happen, but then, we received Marian's gift. So now we're in a position to do even more." Planning is underway for further improvements, made possible by the remaining dollars from the campaign, and the hope that others—like the donors who made the Pavilion a reality—will continue to drive a lasting impact through the legacy of giving.

Thanks to her father's inspiration, and the ongoing support of a thoughtful, committed group of people, Marian has no doubt that great things are in store. "I am confident that the exceptional medical professionals here will continue his legacy, providing compassionate, high-quality care to every patient."



The Pavilion's reception space was designed to ease anxiety and foster calm, every detail chosen with our patients in mind. Photo by Hilary Schwab

Pete Monge continues a legacy of compassion.

By Jennifer Smith, vice president of Philanthropy

For decades, Pete Monge was at the heart of MedStar Montgomery Medical Center, serving as president and leading with an unwavering commitment to the community. Now, Pete and his wife, Cathie, are giving back in an extraordinary way.

The couple has made a generous donation to support renovations at the Addiction and Mental Health Center (AMHC). For more than 50 years, the AMHC has been a vital resource, but it's time for an upgrade. Significant progress has been made, but additional support is still needed to create a more modern, welcoming space for those in need of healing.

"I hope others will join me in supporting this important cause," said Pete. "Mental health affects all of us—whether personally, through a loved one, or a friend. This is our opportunity to make a lasting impact."

Every contribution matters. Pete and Cathie's generosity serves as a powerful reminder of what we can accomplish when we come together as a community. Pete is sharing news of their gift to raise awareness of the need and inspire others to give back.



MedStar Montgomery Medical Center President Emily Briton and former President Pete Monge cheer on the future of the Addiction and Mental Health Center—rallying support for a space that truly reflects the dignity of those it serves. Photo by MedStar Health

Learn how you can support the Addiction and Mental Health Center at [MedStarHealth.org/AMHC](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/AMHC) or contact the philanthropy office at **301-774-8804**.

Meet our **new** provider.



Ariel Trilling
Obstetrics and gynecology
P 301-570-7424

It's how we treat people.