

## **2017 - NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER FUNDRAISER**

The Friends of Altoona Hospital are a 150-member-strong group of volunteers who act as an auxiliary to support UPMC Altoona. The group was founded in 1903 and has used the titles Women's Auxiliary and Junior Auxiliary. Initially a women's group, today the Friends welcome both female and male volunteers. In addition to operating the UPMC Altoona Hospital and Station Medical Center gift shops, the Friends hold multiple fundraisers annually, including the Masquerade Jewelry Sale, Root Beer Float Fundraiser, Holiday Basket Raffle, Fashion Show, and Sunshine Book Sales.

The proceeds from every fundraiser and the gift shops support UPMC Altoona and its patients. Many of the Friends fundraisers have become annual traditions that are enjoyed and looked forward to by hospital staff and visitors. The group's generosity initially focused on raising funds for the Altoona School of Nursing, which closed in 1996. Projects funded over the years included hospital expansions in 1950, 1958, and 2000, featuring a \$150,000 gift to support construction of the hospital's signature six-story atrium. The generosity of the Friends has also included funding for scholarships, a security system for infant safety, hospital chapel renovations, medical equipment, and, most recently, \$50,000 to support the renovation and re-equipping of the 18-suite birthing unit at UPMC Altoona.

In 2009, the Friends welcomed the members of the Women's Auxiliary of Bon Secours Hospital, previously a member of the Mercy Regional Health System, to their ranks. The coming together of these committed organizations, both comprised of individuals focused on the hospitals and their patients, strengthened the ability of the Friends to continue their mission.

Friends leaders have included nurses, physicians' spouses, and leading community stakeholders. Membership in the Friends provides pride and purpose to many retired citizens in our region. Friends members know their work has an important impact on the lives of both staff members and patients at UPMC Altoona.

The Friends legacy of giving spans generations of committed individuals whose passion and tireless dedication are evident throughout the hospital we see today.

The Allegheny Mountains Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals is proud to recognize the Friends of Altoona Hospital's dedication and service to UPMC Altoona and its patients as volunteer fundraisers of the year for 2017.