At the very core of MMC’s values is the commitment to providing patient-centered care, and that begins with ensuring that our workforce has access to cutting-edge training and education. Every year, funds from the Annual Giving Program allow hundreds of nurses the opportunity to advance their knowledge through conferences, seminars, and coursework. Nursing staff gain valuable education in best practices, methods and procedures. This results in caregivers who are equipped to provide the best treatment options to our patients. Additionally, MMC is actively involved in educating the next generation of nursing professionals in Maine. In collaboration with St. Joseph’s College, employees in entry-level health care roles have the opportunity to pursue an expedited undergraduate degree in nursing while maintaining their current position at MMC. Innovative partnerships like this work to solve the nursing shortage facing our state by providing greater opportunities to enhance professional education.

Among our aging population in Maine, and across the country, the occurrence of Alzheimer’s disease and other memory disorders is increasing. These diseases can have a devastating effect on the quality of life of our loved ones and our families. Unfortunately, the causes of Alzheimer’s disease and its prevention and treatment remain poorly understood. Dr. Heidi Henninger, a neurologist and researcher at Maine Medical Center, and her colleagues are studying the occurrence of seizure activity in the brain of some patients with early Alzheimer’s disease to determine whether anti-seizure medications may slow or prevent their decline in memory function. Although still in the early stages, Dr. Henninger’s research may provide new and novel approaches to the diagnosis and treatment of this disorder.

The gift of life is one of the greatest gifts that someone can give or receive. Each year, dozens of healthy people come forward to undergo a lengthy battery of tests and complex surgery to offer their kidney to someone who needs it. In the last 30 years, over 600 living kidney donors from Maine and Northern New England have made this supreme gift to a friend, relative, or even someone they did not know, in an effort to improve their quality of life and “do the right thing.” This year in April, National Donate Life Month, generous contributions to the Annual Giving Program will support a Living Donor Celebration. It will provide an opportunity to honor living kidney donors in our community as well as dispel myths about kidney donation and create awareness about the critical need for organ donors in Maine.