# SCI News

A publication by the Spinal Cord Injury Program at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital.

Issue #6; Spring/Summer 2008



Ken Walsh, former Mary Free Bed SCI patient, is back to work running Walsh Construction Company.

### **Taking Care of Business Planning for school or career after SCI**

You have a plan for your life. Finish high school. Go to college. Get a job doing something you love. In Tamayrr Salahuddin's case, he was planning on a career playing professional football – he even had a sports agent and had participated in a tryout. But one winter morning, shortly after that pro ball tryout, with the snow falling and the roads slick, Tamayrr headed off to class at Grand Valley State University. The next thing he knew he was in the hospital, unable to move, a ventilator breathing for him. He was told he'd never walk again, he'd live in a nursing home, he'd always be on a vent.

Fast forward two years. Tamayrr walks, unassisted no less, across a stage to receive his college diploma. Tamayrr's plans for pro ball won't work out, but he will work in sports; he plans to be an athletic director for a middle school or high school. (Read more about Tamayrr in the following section: SCI Patients Speak Out.)

A spinal cord injury disrupts nearly every chapter of life from that point forward, including career goals and employment prospects. Once medically stable, it can be a hard thing to figure out how to get on with life. Some may even question if getting on with life is possible given their prognosis.

Many people who have come to Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital following a spinal cord injury initially were uncertain of their school or career goals. Thinking about going back to school and preparing for a new career, continuing with a current career, or changing careers seemed daunting. In the end, many make the changes needed and find the will and discipline to get back to living.

Of course, many factors go into the decision to return to school or work or to begin a new career - factors such as injury level and severity, age, previous education and work experience, health issues, and medical complications. Every person and every injury is different. But, tapping into the right resources can make all the difference when it comes to making decisions about the future.

### **SCI Patients Speak Out** Tamayrr Salahuddin

Before his car accident in January 2006, Tamayrr Salahuddin had the attention of the NFL. A student at Grand Valley State University (GVSU), he was working toward a degree in sports science, but really had his sights set on pro ball. Tamayrr's accident left him with a C-2 fracture and paralysis throughout his body.

"Recovery is the hardest thing I've done in my life," says Tamayrr." Being an athlete helped me maintain a rigorous schedule. I was competing for my life."

Tamayrr returned to classes at GVSU after 18 months of rehab. When he returned to school, he used the elevator

continued on next page



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instead of taking the stairs. Adaptive equipment – an AFO, a cane, a one-strap back pack – also made things a little easier. He'd be up two to three hours before class started so he could get ready and be on time.

"Going to college is a lot like going to work," Tamayrr points out. "Get up early in the day. You're working on completing 12-15 credit hours a semester. You have to be on time. People have certain expectations of you, you have to be able to perform and complete assignments on time – just like a job. Teachers expected the same from me as they did from the other students." When Tamayrr finished his college career, he walked across the stage to receive his diploma.

In addition to interning at a Grand Rapids elementary school, Tamayrr participates in Mary Free Bed's Intense Therapy for Motor Recovery Program three days a week. In July, he will be at GVSU directing kids in a football camp.

Tamayrr's advice for those getting back to living: "It's going to be a struggle to get back to life. You're always going to have to work harder. Just take it day by day. It's hard to get back into the real world. Stay focused and work at it."

#### **Chuck Pierson**

Chuck Pierson sustained his C-7 incomplete spinal cord injury in a car accident his senior year of high school. He'd planned to pursue a career in mechanical drafting - before the days of computer aided design - but losing use of his right hand meant re-evaluating his career goals. He first attended a state technical school, then went on to graduate from Ferris State University with a degree in accounting.

Because of an economic downturn after his graduation in 1981, Chuck worked part-time for two years at what was then Old Kent Bank. After he was hired on full-time by Old Kent Bank, the bank went though a couple of buyouts and Chuck's job was eventually eliminated. Chuck is now employed by Image Builders Marketing where he's worked in sales for more than two years.

With experience and hindsight on his side, Chuck believes attitude plays a big part in a person's success when returning to work after a spinal cord injury.

"Go into it with a positive attitude and don't take 'no' for an answer," Chuck says. "Be careful not to sell yourself short. Don't feel that you can't do something."



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#### **Brad Prince**

Brad Prince, a social studies teacher for Hudsonville Public Schools, has taught for the district for nine years – five of those years before he sustained his spinal cord injury. During a mission trip to lowa, Brad fell from a tree, landing on the back of his head and breaking his neck. He has an incomplete SCI at the C-6 level.

Brad returned to his job after taking a year off for therapy and to figure out how he would approach teaching from a wheelchair.

"I had to learn how to do the job from my wheelchair," Brad said. "I had to make sure everything was at my level and that I would be able to reach things. I have people who are available to be my hands, if need be."

Michigan Rehab Services worked with Brad to help cover the expense of a van conversion and to ensure that he had everything he needed to make his transition back to work as trouble-free as possible.

Brad advises employers and employees with disabilities to work with an occupational therapist prior to beginning or returning to work. It's helpful to have a therapist come to the workplace and go through the duties that the job entails to identify problem areas.

"Obviously, employers may have to make some modifications to make the job easier; however, employers should be open to the possibility of needing to make more changes after the employee is back at work for a while as other problem areas may reveal themselves while on the job," Brad says. "It's important that employers be patient and open-minded, and not to expect everything to be perfect on day one."

"Most colleges have disability services that will try to make your college experience as normal as possible." Brad said. 'They don't want your disability to get in the way of your dreams."



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Brad is currently a part-time graduate student in GVSU's Masters for Education Leadership Program.

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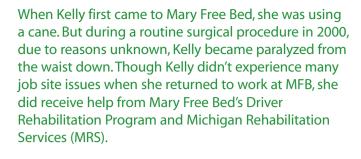
Brad's experience returning both to college and to work has made him realize that having patience with the process is important. "Things don't always go perfectly right away, and you my be a little frustrated from time to time - don't let that stop you from working," Brad says. "It can become a fun learning and life experience as you reinvent yourself as an employee from a wheelchair."

#### Kelly Merz

Kelly Merz was born with a form of spina bifida. Over the years, she lost some function and began to have trouble walking when she was in high school. Interested in a career in physical or occupational therapy, Kelly attended a high school career fair where a physical therapist promptly told her there was no way she could do the job.

After the career fair and still determined to work in the therapy field because she wanted to help people, Kelly attended Grand Valley State University where she earned a degree in recreational therapy. She completed an internship at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital, then was asked to join the staff after her graduation. She's been with Mary Free Bed for 11 years, first with the Stroke Program and now with the Spinal Cord Injury Program.

"Don't constantly ask if everything is OK, especially in front of other employees," Kelly says. "I suggest having an initial meeting to discuss the work environment and changes that need to be made. Let your employee know that you have an open door to discuss any future needs that may arise."



The Driver Rehabilitation Program helped Kelly with equipping her car with hand controls and hydraulic seating. In addition to the assistance she received in high school and college with car insurance and tuition costs, MRS paid for a new ramp at Kelly's house once she began using a chair.

As a person with a disability, and as someone who works with others with disabilities, Kelly has found that the best way to approach your job from a wheelchair is to be open and honest with your employer regarding modifications you need to your work environment.

"If there are a variety of concerns, you may need to request that a job site evaluation be completed by an occupational therapist," Kelly says. "Ultimately, you need to be proactive in discussing your needs."

If you're an employer helping someone with a disability transition back to his or her job, Kelly recommends not going overboard with concern.

"Don't constantly ask if everything is OK, especially in front of other employees," Kelly says. "I suggest having an initial meeting to discuss the work environment and changes that need to be made. Let your employee know that you have an open door to discuss any future needs that may arise."

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#### Jocelyn Dettloff

Jocelyn Dettloff graduated from the University of Michigan in 1993 with a degree in English literature. Having no idea what she wanted to do after college, she spent the next few years traveling the world. In Africa in 1997, she sustained a spinal cord injury while sliding down a sand dune.

"Prior to my injury I was a waitress and bartender with no proper career path ahead of me," Jocelyn said. "I never felt like my injury had an impact on my job prospects. Six months after my accident, I got a job working part-time at Schuler Books and Music, and I did spend two-and-a-half years on SSDI before taking the leap to full-time employment. I knew that the public assistance I was on would be a temporary thing for me."

For Jocelyn, a big challenge while working at the bookstore was having the general public accept her as being a "normal" employee, and having them understand that she could do the same things her fellow booksellers did.

"If you have a career goal you want to achieve, don't let people try to hold you back because of your disability," Jocelyn says, "So much can be done with technology these days."

"Asking questions about how things are done or what a person needs is the only way to get the real answers," Jocelyn said. "Assuming an answer, especially if it is a wrong assumption, doesn't help the employee adapt better to the work environment."

"It was actually a great first job," Jocelyn said. "The culture and environment of the store was very open and accepting. It was a good place to expose myself to many different people and situations, and also to expose a lot of people to a person in a chair just doing a 'regular' job."

Now, Jocelyn is the Development Director for Disability Advocates of Kent County (DAKC), a disability rights organization. She has worked for DAKC for eight years, moving into fundraising after being with the organization for one year.

"If you have a career goal you want to achieve, don't let people try to hold you back because of your disability," Jocelyn says, "So much can be done with technology these days."

Employers hiring a person with a disability, Jocelyn believes, cannot be afraid to ask questions.

"Asking questions about how things are done or what a person needs is the only way to get the real answers," Jocelyn said. "Assuming an answer, especially if it is a wrong assumption, doesn't help the employee adapt better to the work environment."



# Save the Date

Adaptive Water Ski Clinic Friday, July 11, 2008 and Friday, August 15, 2008 Session I: 8:30 am – 12:30 pm Session II: 11:30 am – 4:00 pm John Collins Park on Reeds Lake East Grand Rapids

Learn to water ski, or just give it a try! Sign up for the Adaptive Water Ski Clinic and you will receive the individual support you need to participate in this exciting activity. For more information, visit <a href="https://www.maryfreebed.com">www.maryfreebed.com</a>.

2008 SCI Symposium:
"The Road Wide Open – Rehab,
Research and Recovery"
Friday, September 19, 2008
7:30 am – 4:45 pm
Crowne Plaza of Grand Rapids

Don't miss this year's SCI Symposium! Special rates for SCI survivors and family members!

We are very pleased to announce that **Wise Young**, **MD**, **PhD**, will be our keynote speaker. Dr. Young is recognized as one of the world's outstanding neuroscientists and is a highly-regarded expert in the field of SCI research. We are also excited to welcome **Susan Harkema**, **PhD**, a leading researcher in the field of neurological rehabilitation. Dr. Harkema's primary research focus is the study of the plasticity of the human lumbosacral spinal cord in individuals with spinal cord injury. Dr. Harkema will present on evidence

and application for activity-based therapy and neurologic injury. Distinguished speaker **Maria Regina Reyes, MD,** of the University of Washington Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation and Spina Bifada Clinics, board certified in both physical medicine and rehabilitation and spinal cord injury medicine, will provide insight into prevention of chronic complications of SCI and will also discuss health and wellness. The symposium will also include an SCI survivor panel discussion and highlight our own SCI Program's innovations and outcomes.

#### **Interested in Attending?**

For more information or to register, go on-line to <u>www.maryfreebed.com</u> or call 616.242.0476.

#### 32nd Annual Fifth Third River Bank Run Saturday, May 9, 2009

Mary Free Bed eagerly anticipates the return of the elite wheelchair athletes who were unable to participate in this year's race due to competing Paralympic pre-qualifying races. If you're interested in participating in next year's Wheelchair or Handcycle Divisions of the race, please contact Kelly Merz at 616.356.1861 or <a href="mailto:kelly.merz@maryfreebed.com">kelly.merz@maryfreebed.com</a>. You can learn more about the Fifth Third River Bank Run by visiting <a href="https://www.53riverbankrun.com">www.53riverbankrun.com</a>.

# Staff News



#### **Experiences**

Amy Korn, PT, and husband Matt journeyed to Zimbabwe, Africa, in November 2007, to support and encourage their church's ministry partners in the schools, orphanages, and churches there. Amy reports they were profoundly struck by

the sense of joy exhibited by the Zimbabwean people who are struggling to survive under such desperate circumstances.

**Jackie Wondolowski, LMSW, SCI Program Manager,** served as a judge for this year's Ms. Wheelchair Michigan pageant held on March 1, 2008.



Congratulations!

Kristy Simpson, PT, and
Andrea Myers, LMSW, were
recent recipients of Mary Free
Bed's CARES (Customers Always

R Ex So TI re ei th

Receive Excellent Service) Awards. The program recognizes employees for their outstanding customer service.

**Max Weir, NT,** graduated in May 2008 from Grand Valley State University with a bachelor's degree in Healthcare Systems Administration.



#### Welcome!

Lindsey Thomas, PTA, joined the SCI Program in December 2007. Lindsey grew up in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and graduated in May 2007 with her physical therapist assistant degree from Kellogg Community College. Lindsey

completed a student affiliation on our SCI Program and has previous work experience with the Center for Spinal Cord Injury Recovery and Bronson Methodist Hospital. Lindsey enjoys reading, photography, scrapbooking, traveling, going to concerts and events, and working out.

# Babies are Born! Tina Monahon, SLP-CCC, and husband Shawn are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Kayla Marie. Kayla was born November 20, 2007. She weighed 8 lbs., 5 oz., and was 19.5 inches long.





**Ashley Parsh Wagner, NT,** gave birth to Hunter Michael on November 11, 2007. She weighed 8 lbs., 5 oz., and was 22 inches long.

#### Wedding Bells!

**Tara Smith, RN,** married Lorenzo Mosley on March 7, 2008.

**Patsy Schumacher, NT,** was married to Eric Pierson on October 3, 2007.

# Alumni News

Yo (Yulanda) Bellingar (2001) recently wrote and published a book about her injury and rehabilitation experiences, entitled *Unscheduled Landing*. "I wrote about the emotional roller coaster experienced in rebuilding my life and healing my spirit in an effort to encour-



age others to do the same. My mission is to share this inspirational story with those going through tragic and traumatic situations," says Yo.

In addition to sharing Yo's own experiences, the book includes a personal journal at the end so readers can record their own journey through illness or injury. Copies will be available for loan from Mary Free Bed's patient library or order via email at ybellingar@gmail.com.

Shelly Loose (1987), Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2007, crowned the new Ms. Wheelchair Michigan, Kathy Lemieux, at the 2008 pageant on March 1.

Congratulations to Kathy! Shelly is now the State Coordinator for Ms. Wheelchair Michigan. Shelly reports that the next Ms. Wheelchair Michigan pageant will be held at Aquinas College's Donnelly Center on Saturday, February 28, 2009. She encourages women who are wheelchair users to apply. The pageant is not a beauty pageant; rather, it's an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of those living their lives with their disabilities. The deadline for applications is February 11, 2009. More information is available online at: <a href="https://www.mswheelchairmichigan.org">www.mswheelchairmichigan.org</a>.

**Geoff Newmyer** (2007) married Stacey Stuhan on March 1, 2008. Congratulations and best wishes!



## **Event** Information

Mary Free Bed Sponsors Prize Money for Midwest Indoor Wheelchair Championships – July 18-20, 2008

- Friday 9:00 am 9:00 pm
   Orchard Hills Athletic Club, Grand Rapids, MI
- Saturday 9:00 am 6:00 pm MVP Athletic Club, Rockford, MI
- Sunday 9:00 am 2:00 pm MVP Athletic Club, Rockford, MI

The Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association (GRWSA) is proud to host a USTA- and ITF-sanctioned tennis tournament July 18-20, 2008. The tournament is a part of the NEC wheelchair tennis tour, which attracts more than 70 athletes around the world. The athletes are welcome to attend a player banquet on Saturday evening at the Ramada Plaza, complete with dinner and raffle prizes.

Come on out and watch some great competitive tennis! The Midwest Indoor Wheelchair Championships is the only tournament sanctioned by both USTA and ITF on the wheelchair circuit in the Midwest! If you are interested in playing, volunteering, or supporting the tournament, please contact Lynn Bender at <a href="mailto:lynncurt10s@yahoo.com">lynncurt10s@yahoo.com</a>.

Special thanks to Mary Free Bed Guild for sponsoring and providing the 2008 \$10,000 in prize money! ■

For more information, visit <u>www.grwsa.com</u> or email <u>lynncurt10s@yahoo.com.</u>







#### 31st Annual Fifth Third River Bank Run Wheelchair and Handcycle Divisions

The Mary Free Bed Guild and Spinal Cord Injury Program once again sponsored the Wheelchair and Handcycle Divisions of the Fifth Third River Bank Run on May 10, 2008. The race had a record-breaking turnout. Seventeen athletes participated in the Wheelchair Division and 25 athletes participated in the Handcycle Division for a total of 42 racers. Participants came from all over the United States, including: Arizona, California, Georgia, Michigan, Ohio, Texas, and Virginia, with one racer even traveling from Spain. Overall, more than 16,000 athletes participated in this year's River Bank Run.

Results, times, and payouts for the 2008 race are posted online at <a href="https://www.maryfreebed.com">www.maryfreebed.com</a>.

Many positive comments regarding the race were received, including this note from a veteran racer to an SCI Program staff member: "Thanks again for all your hard work that you and all the Mary Free Bed group do to put on a class event. You are the best in the state as far as I am concerned."

"The success of the race is also due to our amazing volunteers who commit to a variety of job responsibilities over race weekend," says Kelly. "Words cannot express how much we appreciate them and all that they do."

### Special Thanks

**Special thanks to Kelly Merz and Brie Taylor** for their superb coordination of this year's Wheelchair and Handcycle Divisions!



#### Spinal Cord Injury Peer Support Group at Mary Free Bed

One of the best resources for people with spinal cord injuries needing information about school and employment is their peers. Join the Spinal Cord Injury Support Group at Mary Free Bed. Meetings are held on the fourth Mondays of the months of January, April, July, and October at 6pm, in the 2nd floor conference room at Mary Free Bed. Visit <a href="https://www.maryfreebed.com">www.maryfreebed.com</a> for more information.

#### **Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

#### Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)

Vocational rehabilitation services help individuals successfully return to employment following a significant injury or illness. Mary Free Bed works with Michigan Rehabilitation Services, a government agency whose mission it is to assist individuals with disabilities to achieve employment and self-sufficiency. An MRS onsite vocational rehabilitation counselor is available at Mary Free Bed two days a week.

A person is eligible to receive services from MRS's onsite voc rehab counselor at Mary Free Bed if he or she is a Mary Free Bed inpatient or outpatient; has a disability that prevents him or her from returning to previous employment; or has a disability that prevents him or her from entering the job market.

MRS's services include skill training, job placement, job coaching, assistive technology, transportation, and much more. Contact the Spinal Cord Injury Program for more information.

#### Disability Advocates of Kent County (DAKC)

Disability Advocates of Kent County exists to advocate, educate, and inform on independent living options for persons with disabilities and to create a barrier-free society for all. In addition to advocating for people who have been discriminated against by their employer because of their disability, the agency works with businesses to educate and dispel the myths and fears that may exist in hiring persons with disabilities. DAKC also works in partnership with Michigan Rehabilitation Services and their clients to conduct independent living assessments and work on pre-employment skill building.

For information, visit Disability Advocates of Kent County's web site at <a href="https://www.dakc.us">www.dakc.us</a> or call the agency's information and referral specialist at 616.949.1100, ext. 226.

#### Online Resources

#### • www.rileyguide.com/abled.html

Employment Resources for the Disabled: the Riley Guide is a directory of employment and career information sources and services on the Internet. These are resources specifically set up to meet the needs or address the interests of people with disabilities.

#### • www.DOL.gov

The U.S. Department of Labor's web site is a gateway to many links for workers with disabilities. Visit the site for information on everything from its Disability Program, to job information, to temporary employment options for people with disabilities.

#### • www.ncsd.com

Visit the National Council for Support of Disability Issues web site for free online classes, resume posting, and job bank.

#### • www.DisabilityInfo.gov

Visit the employment section of this site and discover a variety of topics related to employment of people with disabilities. Find advice for individuals with disabilities seeking work; help for employers looking for hardworking and dedicated employees; information on employment rights; laws and regulations; resources for employment programs; and job accommodations for people with disabilities.

#### • www.jan.wvu.edu/links/employ.htm

The Job Accommodation Network's site offers disability-related employment links and information.

### Stay in Touch

#### Send your personal news and updates to:

Alumni News/SCI Program Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital 235 Wealthy SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-5299 fax: 616.493.9577

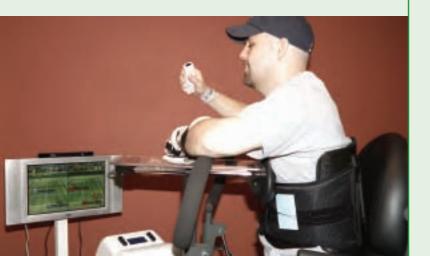
e-mail: sciprogram@maryfreebed.com

### Give your Feedback

Mary Free Bed launched a newly-designed web site in April. Featuring expanded content, the new site offers in-depth information on MFB's inpatient programs and injuries and illnesses treated. Mary Free Bed's Marketing & Public Relations Department would like your feedback regarding the new site. If interested, please contact Sandra Mitchell, web content specialist, at 616.242.9272 or at <a href="web.feedback@maryfreebed.com">web.feedback@maryfreebed.com</a>.

# Special Acknowledgement

**Special thanks to Dan (2007) and Jerel Bathrick** for their generous donation. Funds were used to purchase Wii systems, games, and controllers for patient use in therapy. SCI therapists note that "Wii-hab" has expanded treatment options for those too fatigued or ill to participate in traditional therapy, and has additionally encouraged participation by introducing some fun and entertaining alternatives to traditional therapeutic activities.





"life is love, so love life"

**Shawn Hall** (2000) has been staying busy, to say the least. After graduating from Central Michigan University in 2006 with a B.A. in Broadcast and Cinematic Arts, Shawn has been working nonstop on his many entrepreneurial endeavors. In 2002, while attending CMU, Shawn started a production company called One Love Productions where he records, produces, and masters music for local artists. Not long after starting One Love Productions, Shawn saw a void in the home health care business and started Roll On Rehab, Inc. Roll On Rehab, Inc., is a home health care agency that focuses on the growth of people with spinal cord injuries by providing them with nurses and aides who will key in on the personal and professional growth of clients as well as provide the everyday care they need. As a former client of home health agencies, Shawn was dissatisfied with the lack of personal care that was provided. Now as CEO, Shawn plans to grow the company and do his part in bettering the lives of SCI patients everywhere. If that isn't enough, Shawn also works in the entertainment industry as an actor and model. Shawn just recently was featured in print ads for the wheelchair company Permobil (look for him on the back cover of the October 2007 New Mobility magazine) and has various other video and print ads coming as well.

When Shawn isn't working on growing his companies, he is trying to enjoy his life to the fullest. Whether it's relaxing at home or it's a crazy night out on the town, Shawn enjoys time with his family and friends. Recently ordained as a minister, he also spends a lot of his free time writing and speaking, trying to inspire others to enjoy all that life has to offer. Along with his weekly inspirational blogs, Shawn has begun writing his first book. "I just enjoy consistently moving forward. I just gotta keep it rollin'." With a non-profit organization in the works as well, Shawn looks to continue on his path to personal and professional growth. So like he always says, "Life is love so love life!"



#### SCI Program Director Celebrates Anniversary with Mary Free Bed

A quarter century has passed since Dr. Sam Ho arrived at Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital to serve as the Spinal Cord Injury Program's Medical Director. When Dr. Ho began his career at Mary Free Bed, his hope was to establish a high-quality SCI Program with a consistent high-standard of care.

"I think we are doing a good job," Dr. Ho says. "We've maintained a very cohesive team, and we are all dedicated to providing quality care and keeping current with the latest developments in spinal cord injury care."

"We established a system of spinal cord injury care that benefits the community," Dr. Ho continues. "No matter what acute care hospital our patients are admitted to, our SCI program is 'borderless' – we take patients regardless of which hospital they go to. We are dedicated and supportive of all of the hospitals."

Over the past 25 years, Dr. Ho has earned a reputation as a caring and considerate doctor, a physician who takes care of the whole person, not just the injury. Believing there is a full life to live after a spinal cord injury, Dr. Ho encourages all of his patients to think about their future: finishing college, returning to work, or learning a new job.

"It's important to Dr. Ho that once his patients' medical needs are met and rehabilitation goals are set, that he and the rest of the SCI team help patients figure out how to get on with life," Jackie Wondolowski, SCI Program Manager, says. "As well as taking care of so many details, Dr. Ho always looks at the big picture. That's why he was instrumental in securing Mary Free Bed's Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) - accreditation for its spinal cord system of care. CARF's accreditation recognizes the SCI Program's life-time follow-up medical services."

Mary Free Bed's Medical Director, John Butzer, MD, notes that in the 25 years as the SCI Program's Medical Director, Dr. Ho has been a strong advocate for patients with spinal cord injuries. "Mary Free Bed is proud of the innovative programs that have been developed under Dr. Ho's leadership to serve people with spinal cord injuries," Dr. Butzer says.

In reflection of his time at MFB, Dr. Ho points out that the idea of him coming to Mary Free Bed originally was to provide care to spinal cord injury patients and to make good decisions concerning their care.

"We've done very well... at the end of each patient's stay, we can say that helped somebody through a transition," says Dr. Ho. But, in typical fashion, Dr. Ho shifts the spotlight from himself and places it on his patients and on his team.

"I've been so blessed to work with a consistent experienced staff for so many years who are truly dedicated to providing excellent patient care – you just can't place a monetary value on that," Dr. Ho says. "But, my proudest accomplishment is what you read in the SCI Alumni News. It's what the patients have done, not what I have done. Our job is to make sure the system is in place for the patients to do their work."

In addition to his appointment at Mary Free Bed, Dr. Ho is also the Director of Spectrum Health's Neuroscience and Trauma Rehabilitation Program. He is active as a fellow with the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and as a member of the American Medical Association, the Michigan State Medical Society, and the Kent County Medical Society. Since 1998, Dr. Ho has also served as a Clinical Assistant Professor with Michigan State's Osteopathic and Human Medicine Department.

### Program Staff

- Amie Dlouhy, RN, BSN, Patient Care Director, Spinal Cord Injury and Brain Injury Programs
- Sam Ho, MD, Medical Director, Spinal Cord Injury Program
- **Bill Sonday, LMSW,** Director, Inpatient Therapy Programs
- Jackie Wondolowski, LMSW, Manager, Spinal Cord Injury Program



# SCI Program News: 2008 Symposium

"The Road Wide Open – Rehab, Research and Recovery" Friday, September 19, 2008 7:30 am – 4:45 pm Crowne Plaza of Grand Rapids

#### **Information and Registration**

Please look inside under the *Save the Date* section for more information. You can find more information by visiting our website at <a href="https://www.maryfreebed.com">www.maryfreebed.com</a> or by calling 616.242.0476.