

# From Uncertainty to Hope

*A family recalls their experience following a paralyzing injury*

**T**WELVE-YEAR-OLD **Deanna Muir** doesn't remember life before her spinal cord injury. When she was just a year-and-a-half old, she was involved in an accident that occurred in her driveway. Initially, doctors thought she had escaped the ordeal with a few broken bones.

"They kept telling me how lucky she was," said Deanna's mom, **Cynthia Muir**. "But then a nurse noticed that she wasn't moving her feet, so more tests were ordered. That's when they discovered she was paralyzed from the chest down."

After spending a few months at a rehabilitation facility, her parents learned about Shriners Hospitals for Children — Chicago. At the very first appointment, **Lawrence C. Vogel, M.D.**, medical director of the spinal cord injury program at the hospital, prescribed braces to keep Deanna's feet straight and a body brace

for her spine. He also gave the family ideas to help Deanna move around the house and develop independence.

"The people at Shriners Hospital were miracle workers," Deanna's mother said. "Until we came there, the stroller was her only outlet for mobility. We didn't realize that she had to stand in order for her legs to grow, and we were able to construct a device to help her stand. We also created a little racecar with wheels on it so she could push herself around the house."

During elementary school, Deanna used a standing device that allowed her to move around unassisted by manipulating her upper body. The device was helpful at the time, but by middle school, Deanna decided a wheelchair would be easier to maneuver. Like many young patients with spinal cord injuries, Deanna

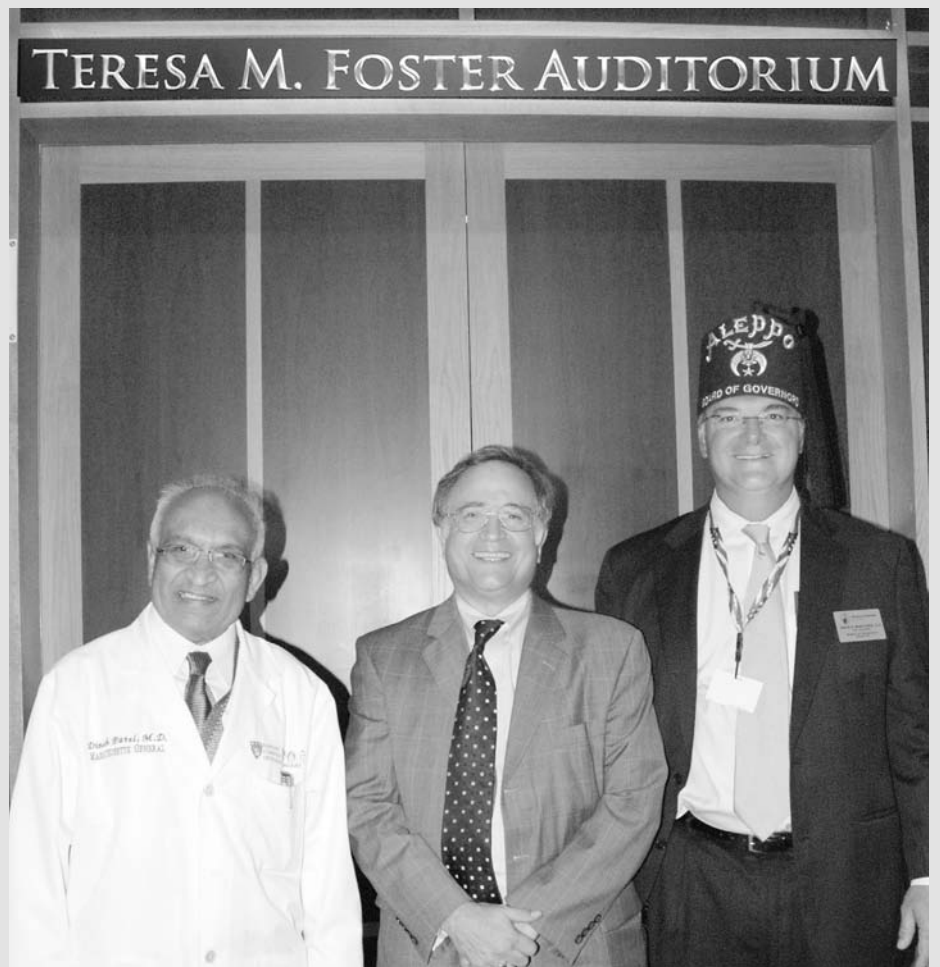
developed scoliosis as she grew. In 2003, doctors treated the problem by placing rods in her spine. She has surgery twice a year so the rods can be expanded for growth, but according to her mom, that doesn't bother her a bit. "She loves going to Shriners Hospital," Cynthia Muir said. "I've never seen a kid that doesn't mind having surgery. We know everyone there, which is the best experience because it's so comfortable and inviting. It's like a second home."



DEANNA MUIR

## Hospital Auditorium Dedication

**O**N Thursday, September 10, physicians, staff, and board members of Shriners Hospitals for Children - Boston, along with Dr. **Dinesh Patel** and Attorney **Bill Kirchick**, dedicated the hospital auditorium in honor of **Teresa M. Foster**. Mrs. Foster bequeathed 5.4 million dollars to the pediatric burn hospital. She was the long standing Office Manager for orthopedic surgeon Dr. Dinesh Patel at Massachusetts General Hospital. According to her Attorney, Bill Kirchick: "Teresa decided to give the money to Shriners Hospital because she believed that they would be good stewards of her funds."



STANDING IN FRONT of the newly dedicated Teresa M. Foster Auditorium at the Shriners Hospitals for Children – Boston are, from left to right: Dr. Dinesh Patel, Attorney Bill Kirchick, and David McKechnie, Vice Chairman of the hospital board of governors.

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