

The Story of Gabriel House of Care

Jorge Bacardi spent the majority of his life living with what doctors believed was cystic fibrosis. It wasn't until he reached his 50s that doctors determined he really had a congenital disease called primary ciliary dyskinesia. His only hope for survival was a double lung transplant.



After much soul-searching and counsel from doctors and family, Jorge and his wife Leslie, made the decision to pursue a transplant. They committed themselves not only to the rigorous process, but to deeply respect and honor the gift of life if he was approved and fortunate enough to receive an organ.

In March 2008, Jorge received a double lung transplant at Mayo Clinic Jacksonville. His surgery was complex but the outcome and recovery were excellent. He left the hospital a few days later, having experienced a full breath of air for the first time in his life. With hearts filled with gratitude, the Bacardis began thinking about how they could give back to honor their organ donor, whom Jorge called "Gabriel" after the archangel Gabriel.

Then in 2009, the Bacardis learned "Gabriel" was Christopher Mark Gregory, a vibrant, nineteen year old student at Loyola University in New Orleans, who suffered a fatal brain aneurism. Leslie and Jorge traveled to the Gregory's home in Baltimore for an emotional meeting with Christopher's parents and family members. To honor Christopher, his family and the transplant team, Jorge and Leslie made a gift to Mayo Clinic. They also provided the leadership gift for the construction of the new hospitality house to be built on Mayo Clinic's west campus. The house was to be named Gabriel House of Care, in honor of Christopher.



The story does not end there. It continues, because with each guest comes another compelling story of courage, determination and a strong human spirit. All of them a tribute to a young man who gave the gift of life to another and a family whose generosity will bring hope and healing to others for generations to come through Gabriel House of Care.



A Community of Healing

www.gabrielhouseofcare.org