

Doing the Right Thing

Shelby Notkin's instinct to support hospitals developed early in life.

WRITTEN BY LAUREL DIGANGI
PHOTOGRAPHED BY SHANE O'DONNELL

A

Foundation trustee since 2007, Shelby Notkin's admiration of hospitals began at the impressionable age of 5 when he accompanied his father, a cardiologist, on his Sunday rounds at a large Catholic hospital in Shelby's birthplace of Paterson, New Jersey.

"I saw how wonderful a Catholic-sponsored hospital could be," says Shelby, who is Jewish. "My dad said it was the cleanest hospital he was ever in and that the sisters cared about having an outstanding hospital more than other hospital administrators."





Decades later these memories encouraged Shelby to donate his time and resources to the Saint John's Health Center Foundation. "Saint John's has not only lived up to but exceeded my positive expectations," he says.

Another factor stems from personal tragedy: Shelby lost both his first wife and his sister to breast cancer. Thirteen years ago, in their memory, he established The Notkin Family Breast Cancer Recovery Program at California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco. With his daughter, Michelle Notkin Rosen, on the board, the program provides assistance to women undergoing breast cancer treatment, serving more than 400 women in 2014 alone.

After Shelby moved to Los Angeles to live closer to Michelle and his grandson, he learned about Saint John's Health Center Foundation and was eager to support the hospital.

"Shelby is the consummate leader," says Robert O. Klein, president and chief executive officer of Saint John's Health Center Foundation. "He has never wavered in his support of the Health Center and in his desire to help us keep improving and growing as a Foundation. We are so grateful for his friendship and expertise."

Shelby's expertise comes from a long, successful career in the financial industry on both Wall Street and the West Coast. After graduating from the Whitman School of Management at Syracuse University and spending two years in the Army, he began his career at E.F. Hutton & Co. as national institutional sales manager.

In 1973 he began work at Morgan Stanley and in 1977

“ Saint John's has not only lived up to but exceeded my positive expectations.”
– Shelby Notkin

became principal/manager of its new San Francisco office—the firm's first West Coast transfer. For more than 20 years he worked with Capital Group in several key positions: chairman of private client services, principal investment officer and global portfolio manager.

His belief in giving back extends beyond the Foundation to a history of serving on many nonprofit boards. Currently he serves on the Music Center's board of directors as treasurer and is on the UCLA Anderson School of Management board of visitors. He is also the co-director of Wilshire Boulevard Temple investment committee and on the board of the Jewish Graduate Student Initiative in Southern California.

In addition, ever since his grandson was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes, Shelby has been highly involved in related organizations. In 2012 the Los Angeles chapter of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation honored him and his family with its prestigious Caregiver Award.

Today Shelby resides in Los Angeles with his wife, Darcie Denkert Notkin, with whom he's recently celebrated four years of marriage, and their two rescued cavalier King Charles spaniels, Pumpkin and Pandora.

Holding a prominent position in the Notkin living room is a unique retirement gift from his colleagues at Capital Group: a pair of his bronzed, size 13 shoes.

Shelby explains, "Shortly after I became chairman of the division of private client services at Capital Group, somebody did something quite foolish. And instead of telling him it was foolish, I raised up my foot and said, 'Next time you'll feel my size 13s.'"

Although Shelby's size 13s were legendary at Capital, Darcie is quick to acknowledge his kind and gentle nature. "You'll never find a person with more integrity or with a larger capacity to love," she says. "So many of us face ethical dilemmas every day, and most of us have to think: what is the right thing to do? Shelby is the only person I know who does the right thing instinctively."

He has been doing not only "right" but extraordinary things for the Foundation. "I want to ensure that we can continue to deliver top-quality medical care as well as help people have a better life," he says. "And due to the strength and dedication of our great new partner, Providence Health & Services, I strongly believe that our future has been ensured." •