

A message from Frank V. Sacco, FACHE, President and Chief Executive Officer

Good day,

Once people pass through our halls and are no longer in our care, what do they think of us and how do they remember their experiences here?

We hope we've given them our best – not just in the performance of our jobs, but as caring and compassionate people. We hope we've made their lives better and brought them happier, healthier tomorrows.

This young man's letter passionately expresses the far-reaching, life-changing impact we can have.

Thank you,



To All of the Doctors, Nurses and the Amazing Staff at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, Especially the Hematology/Oncology Division:

A little more than six years ago, I was diagnosed with acute lymphocytic leukemia (ALL) – a fast-growing cancer. Luckily, even though I had turned 18, I was sent to Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital for treatment. I had never been in a hospital bed before and I felt scared, alone and completely unaware of what was happening around me.

I thought to myself: Leukemia? That doesn't happen to 18-year-old, strong, healthy men.

Just a few days earlier, I was a naive college freshman and now I was staring down a mountain with only one long, treacherous path to take.

The next three years were a series of ups, downs, twists and turns. Ironically, as difficult and as emotionally and physically draining as it was – some of my fondest memories are of that time. Amazing people were introduced into my life. I couldn't begin to list all of them, but there is a special place in my heart for each and every one.

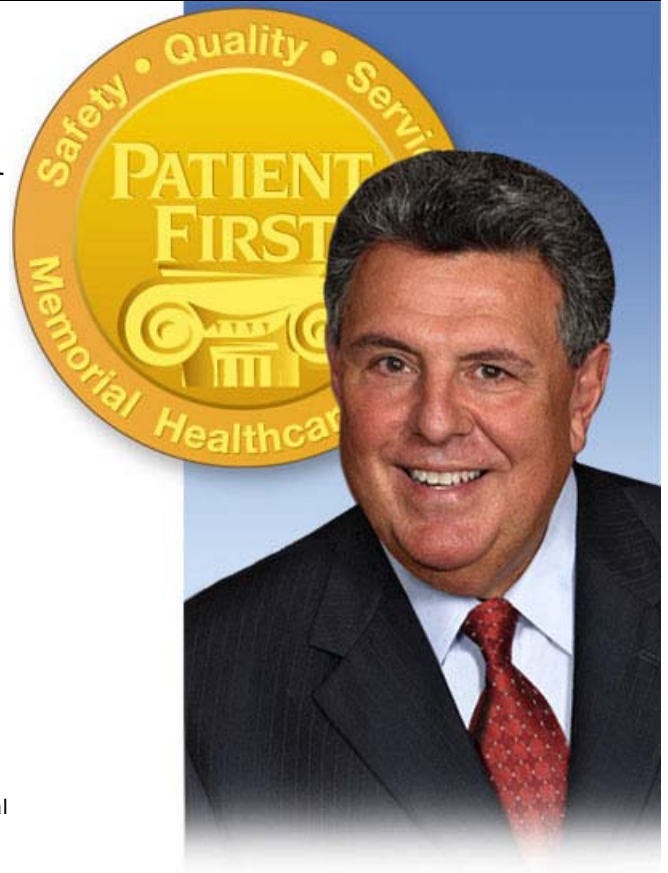
They're not just people doing their jobs. They're family – cheering you up when you need it, or just listening when you're frustrated or angry or sad – genuinely caring and loving people. It is so difficult to explain how deeply I appreciate – and how privileged I feel to know – the people at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital who saved my life.

Since completing my treatment nearly four years ago, I have finished college, taken a job with a great company, regained my physical strength, been in love and experienced heartbreak.

Although some people praise me as a "hero" for beating cancer and consider my accomplishments incredible, there is still a void in my heart.

I'm no hero. The people in that hospital saving lives every day are all heroes. Less fortunate kids whose lives will unfairly be cut short, they are the true heroes.

How do we define a successful life? I believe it is different for every individual, and for me, I feel the stakes are higher. There is a voice in my head every day that tells me I need to shoot for the stars because I've been granted the ultimate gift and I owe the people who helped me receive this gift.



I owe them the satisfaction of knowing that I will chase down that dream, I will live every day like it may be my last, I will be an empathetic and caring person, I will make people smile, I will never live a life of regret, and most importantly, I will make you all proud of me someday.

No longer am I a sick child, but now a healthy man on the journey of living life!

Thank you to every person at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital who has touched my heart.

With love,

Justin

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