

Bell Foundation Brief History

The Bell Foundation was incorporated in 1992, but was not activated until 2005 for the purposes of raising funds to build the new facility. The Foundation's first Executive Director was Jacqueline Chandonnet, who was well known in the community as a news anchor for TV 6 prior to taking this position on. The first Board of Directors that was assembled consisted of 18 community members and hospital personnel, and was chaired by Brett French.

One of the first tasks was having a feasibility study performed, and the consulting group Hillary Lyons Associates was hired to perform it. After interviewing a large number of community members and looking at the financial demographics of our area, it was determined that between \$2-2.5 million could be raised from the community and that there was a potential for \$1-5 million from Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company. Their expectation was that we would raise approximately \$3.5 million to have a successful campaign.

The land was secured via a donation from Dr. Robert DellAngelo, a long-time provider and Board of Directors member. A major push began for major donors of \$25,000 or more, right down to people giving a few dollars. Special events were held, including such things as bringing in regional entertainment groups that performed at the Peterson Auditorium to the Detroit Red Wing Alumni. Cleveland Cliffs was heavily recruited as a partner. Dave Holli of Holli Forest Products and Bill Stream from Peninsula Bank raised over \$1 million in major donors, and were able to also secure in-kind work on clearing the land. The hospital secured bonds for the construction of the project in spring of 2007.

In July 2007, Cleveland Cliffs came through with a \$2 million pledge for the building construction at the ground breaking ceremony. The Capital Campaign then wrapped up with a total of \$7.2 million of cash and in-kind gifts, more than double the feasibility study projection. Following the end of the Capital Campaign, Ms. Chandonnet left the foundation to finish her education and pursue other career opportunities. In December of 2007, David Aro was named Executive Director and along with Tom Edmark, the new Board Chairman set about the task of re-building the Board of Directors. The Bell Foundation had been activated for a single purpose of raising funds for the new facility, and with that job completed, a majority of the board members left. The decision was made to transition the organization into a more traditional role – planned giving, employee giving, grant writing, endowment funds, special events such as the golf outing and Black Tie Gala, as well as a general vehicle for people to give to the hospital. Over the course of 2008-09 much of this structure was put into place as the board was re-built to 15 members and a grant writer was hired. Board committees include planned giving, stewardship, fundraising, governance and ad hoc committees as needed.

Currently, the Bell Foundation is in the process of implementing new programs for giving, and has developed a comprehensive grant program that will help keep the hospital moving forward with capital and programming needs. The annual goal for the foundation is to raise \$1 million in total philanthropic giving.