

## \$1.5 Million Pledged for 'Sam's NICU'

Determined to turn a personal tragedy into something positive for other parents, Steve Salzberg and his wife, Doris, established Sam's Fund several years ago to benefit the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) in memory of Mr. Salzberg's late daughter, Samantha Marie. In March, the East Hanover couple pledged \$1.5 million to the fund to advance the NICU's two-phase expansion that will triple its size to over 22,000 square feet.

Sam's NICU, as it will be called, will cater to the needs of babies and their families, with softer noise and lighting levels, more privacy, and state-of-the-art technology. Most important, the \$15 million facility will be able to accept and care for more at-risk newborns like Samantha.

Sam would have turned 20 this April. But when she was 18 hours old, having been diagnosed with an undeveloped right ventricle, the newborn had to be transferred from Morristown Memorial to a better-equipped New York hospital. During the transfer, she caught an infection that would claim her life seven weeks later.

"If we could have stayed at Morristown, Samantha would have been fine because she would have remained in a sterile environment," Mr. Salzberg says.

Staying local, he adds, would also have been much easier on Samantha's sisters, who were just 2 and 5. Instead, they had to be left behind as their parents drove to the city every day and kept vigil at Samantha's side. "One time we came out to find our car broken into, the dashboard ripped out. It's awful for parents dealing with a heartbreaking situation with their child to have those hassles as well."

"For me, this gift is the perfect way to remember Sam," says Mr. Salzberg, who has the enthusiastic backing of his current wife and six children. "Bringing comfort to people who are in such pain is a positive thing."

The Salzbergs will fulfill their pledge with personal donations and by continuing the annual fundraisers held for Sam's Fund through Mr. Salzberg's company, Chain Reaction Marketing, which provides purchasing and distribution solutions to restaurant chains. On July 3-4, the company will host a silent auction benefit during its Chain Links Networking Forum at the Hyatt Hotel in New York City. Golf tournament fundraisers held during previous networking forums have raised \$210,000 for the NICU.



Photo: Courtesy of the Salzbergs