

Nick Oelrich 'Gift of Life' Classic benefits Shands Children's Hospital

For the past 13 years, State Senator Steve Oelrich's annual golf tournament has raised funds for and promoted organ procurement transplantation. The



State Senator Steve Oelrich presents a check from the 2008 golf tournament to (right) Mary Freeman, LCSW, Shands at UF Social Work Services, for the pediatric heart and lung transplant program and Marguerite Brown, Shands at UF Transplant Center director.

tournament is named after Oelrich's son, Nick, an organ and tissue donor, who saved or enhanced the lives of 108 people after his untimely death in 1995. Each year, the Nick Oelrich "Gift of Life" Golf Classic reminds us of Nick Oelrich and the meaningful contribution he made.

On Nov. 7 2008, Haile Plantation Golf and Country Club was the site of a fundraising golf tournament to benefit children receiving organ transplants at Shands. The 2008 contributions will benefit the Pediatric Transplant Program at Shands Children's Hospital at the University of Florida. Shands Children's Hospital is the only comprehensive pediatric facility in North Central Florida. It supports pediatric programs encompassing general pediatrics, primary care and all the pediatric medical and surgical subspecialties.

The more than \$31,000 raised will go to enhance the quality of life for children and families of organ transplants. For instance, funds may be used for housing families before and after transplant. In pediatrics, the goal is to keep the family together,

particularly when there are siblings because the emotional trauma to siblings is significant when families are separated.

The funds also go to assist patients and their families with cost of living and travel expenses. With the slowing economy, there is increased need to help families who travel a significant distance to Shands Children's Hospital. Lastly, funds may be used to transition and improve quality of life for a child with an organ transplant.

T-shirts raise funds for Shands Children's Hospital

Stuart Estes, RN, Shands Children's Hospital, sold blue and pink PEDIATRIC T-shirts to raise money for his department, the Child Life team and the patients in his department and raised more than \$3,500.

The T-shirts were so popular a second sale during the Shands for Kids Radiothon raised even more money. Then in spring 2009, a set of tie-dyed T-shirts went on sale. Stuart helped spread the spirit of philanthropy, brought his co-workers together and helped Shands Children's Hospital and the children for whom he provides care.



(L-R) John Stephen, Shands Children's Hospital Clinical Coordinator, models a pediatric T-shirt with Stuart Estes, RN, Shands Children's Hospital

"It's like Thanksgiving dinner," Estes said. "Someone has to cook the dinner so many more can come enjoy the feast."

To date, Stuart has raised \$5,328 of which all will be donated to Child Life.