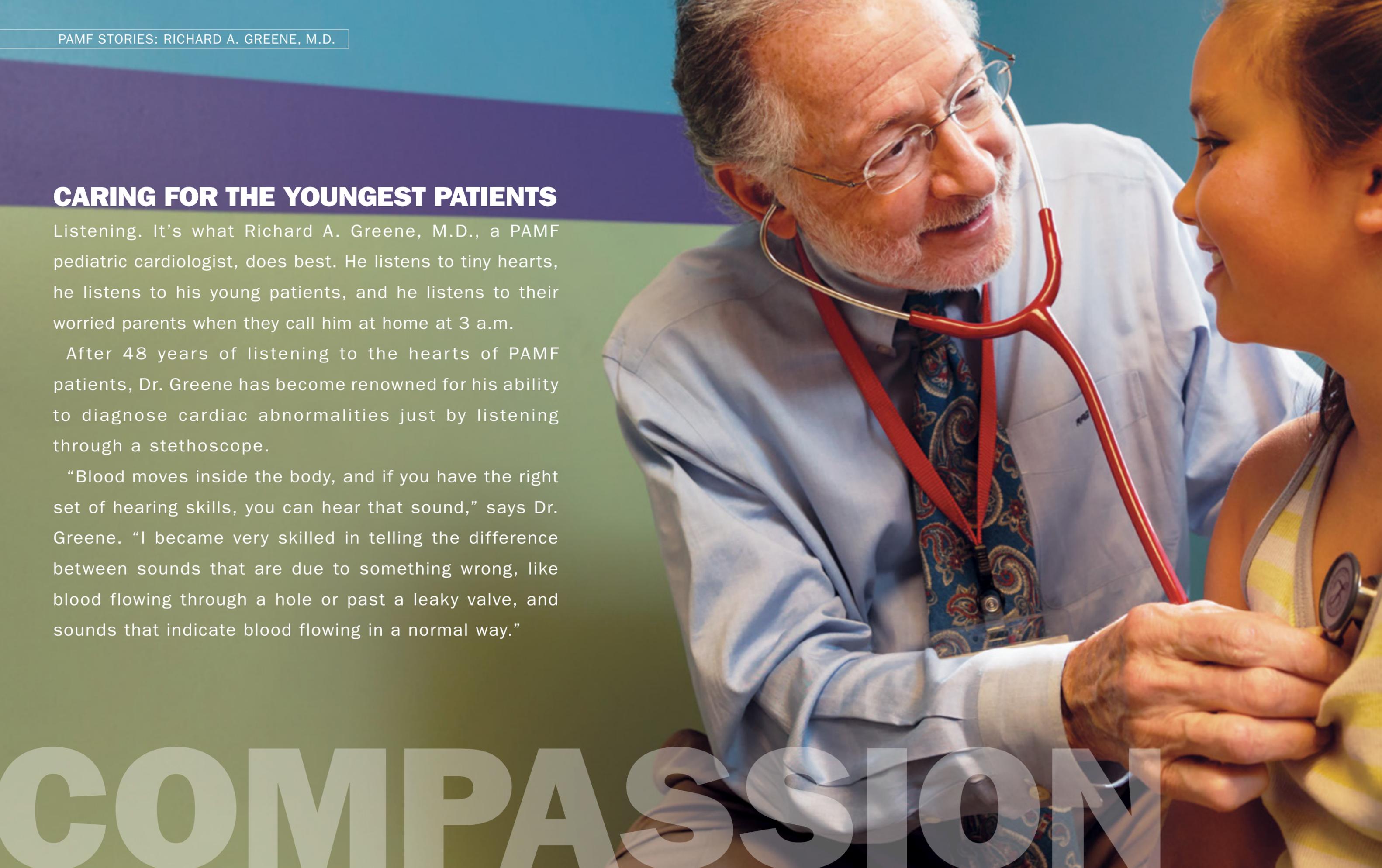


CARING FOR THE YOUNGEST PATIENTS

Listening. It's what Richard A. Greene, M.D., a PAMF pediatric cardiologist, does best. He listens to tiny hearts, he listens to his young patients, and he listens to their worried parents when they call him at home at 3 a.m.

After 48 years of listening to the hearts of PAMF patients, Dr. Greene has become renowned for his ability to diagnose cardiac abnormalities just by listening through a stethoscope.

"Blood moves inside the body, and if you have the right set of hearing skills, you can hear that sound," says Dr. Greene. "I became very skilled in telling the difference between sounds that are due to something wrong, like blood flowing through a hole or past a leaky valve, and sounds that indicate blood flowing in a normal way."



COMPASSION

“The pediatric cardiology fund is a way to invest in the future.”

—Dr. Richard A. Greene

Many years ago, recalls Dr. Greene, “the chief diagnostic skill of a pediatric cardiologist was the ability to use the stethoscope and physical findings to make a diagnosis. There was no ultrasound. The only way we could confirm a diagnosis was to put a catheter into the heart of a baby through a vein or an artery. Then we could measure pressure in various chambers of the heart, or inject a dye and watch the blood flow on an X-ray.”

These days, physicians have a number of non-invasive tools they can use to investigate heart abnormalities, including ultrasound, MRI and CT scans. “Those are very valuable technologies,” says Dr. Greene. “I will use them to confirm a diagnosis if I have any question about what I’ve heard.”

Moreover, Dr. Greene knows that in the future, even more sophisticated tools are likely to be developed. So today, as he makes plans to retire in the not-so-distant

future, he has named PAMF as a beneficiary in his estate and established the Dr. Richard A. Greene Pediatric Cardiology Fund. The fund will provide ongoing support for pediatric cardiology at PAMF, focusing primarily on new technologies and research that will help future physicians provide the highest-quality care.

The ‘Career of a Lifetime’

Dr. Greene established the fund, he says, partially in gratitude for his long career at PAMF. He joined the staff in 1967—the organization was called the Palo Alto Clinic back then—and he never left.

“It has been the career of a lifetime,” he says. “I found a collegiality and professionalism that I had never imagined I’d find in a career. I’ve been so unbelievably lucky to work with the people at PAMF.”

Dr. Greene grew up in New Orleans. He received his medical degree from Louisiana State University in 1961, and on the advice of a friend who lived in Berkeley, moved to California to do his internship at Southern Pacific General Hospital in San Francisco. He then joined the Air Force as a flight medical officer. Both positions focused on adults, but he took every opportunity to learn about pediatrics. He eventually completed a residency in pediatrics and a fellowship in pediatric cardiology at Stanford University Medical Center.

“Pediatric medicine is quite fascinating,” says Dr. Greene. “One of the rewarding things about it is that kids get better fairly quickly. Their illnesses are shorter, more treatable. They can go from having a difficult situation to becoming completely normal. I also loved taking care of the parents, helping them understand the diseases their kids had. I wanted them to realize their kids were resilient and could recover quickly and completely.”

Those reassurances often occurred in the middle of the night, recalls Lynda Greene, Dr. Greene’s wife of more than 35 years. “He has always been able to help parents in times of great stress, and reassure them, even at 3 a.m. And then he could immediately go back to sleep,” she laughs. “We call it the sleep gene.”

Caring for Several Generations

After spending nearly a half-century practicing medicine at PAMF, Dr. Greene has cared for multiple generations of several families. “I’ve cared for at least 500 children whose parents were my patients as infants,” he says. “I’ve been very lucky to have been surrounded by a truly caring and intellectually curious group of parents. It’s been a perfect fit.”

Dr. Greene is not retiring just yet. He has cut back on his hours, and he and Lynda plan to spend more time with their kids and grandkids. He’ll also continue to ski regularly with a group of friends—many of whom he met when he was their camp counselor in the early 1960s.

He’s also doing what he can to help younger doctors learn to be highly skilled pediatricians. In addition to ongoing donations to the fund that bears his name, he works one-on-one with younger physicians. Stanford pediatric cardiology fellows come regularly to his office to hone their skills in using the stethoscope as a primary diagnostic tool. To learn how to listen.



The Dr. Richard A. Greene Pediatric Cardiology Fund

“My wife Lynda and I established the Pediatric Cardiology Fund so we could give back to PAMF in gratitude for a wonderful professional career,” says PAMF pediatric cardiologist Richard A. Greene, M.D.

“It is a way to invest in the future of my pediatric subspecialty. Over my career, I’ve seen that outcomes for children with congenital heart disease have improved dramatically. Today, almost all of these children are able to live normal lives after surgery or other interventions to correct their heart abnormalities.

“The pediatric cardiology field will certainly continue to evolve through research and new technology. As it does, PAMF will need funds to support research and buy new equipment. The fund will be there to help future pediatric cardiologists with those expenses.

“Lynda and I gave an initial donation to the fund and made it part of our estate plans. I hope others will contribute to the fund as well.

“I feel so fortunate to have practiced at PAMF and to have cared for several generations of children. The fund is a legacy that will help to continue my life’s work.”



Dr. Richard A. Greene is surrounded by his grandchildren in a playground that was dedicated in his honor at PAMF’s Palo Alto Center.