



*The newly renamed Mindy Ellen Levine Behavioral Health Center off NC 73.  
(David Boraks/DavidsonNews.net file photo)*

**By DAVID BORAKS** *CorneliusNews.net/DavidsonNews.net*

**Carolinas HealthCare System Behavioral Health-Davidson** has received its largest gift ever, a \$3 million donation from Charlotte's Levine family to help pay for future growth, programming, training and research. CHS said it will re-christen the hospital as the **Mindy Ellen Levine Behavioral Health Center**, in honor of the late daughter of **Sandra** and **Leon Levine**.

The \$36 million hospital **opened in April**, off NC 73 in east Davidson. The Levine's gift was announced Tuesday at a CHS board meeting in Charlotte. The money is from the **Leon Levine Foundation** and three other foundations associated with the Levines' children.

**Tom Gettelman**, the Davidson hospital's director, said in an interview Wednesday that CHS hasn't decided exactly where it will spend the money. But as the largest gift to date for the new nonprofit hospital, it means "We can continue to provide state-of-the-art care in a beautiful and restorative physical environment that is designed for healing, safety and recovery," he said. A CHS announcement said the money "will be used to support future facility enhancements, programmatic development, patient and staff education, and clinical research projects."

CHS has said it eventually hopes to expand the behavioral health hospital, which was built to alleviate a shortage of beds in the region and is the only hospital of its kind in the area north of Charlotte. Right now, the hospital has 66 beds on the 22-acre site. But Gettelman said the site could accommodate up to 44 additional beds in two 22-bed units.

Gettelman also is eager to begin research about the hospital's unique approach to treating patients with a need for short-term in-patient behavioral health care,

including its use of peer support specialists and its use of teams of physicians, psychiatrists, counselors, social workers, nurses and other professionals. CHS officials applauded the gift this week.

“We believe the future of health care is intrinsically tied to our ability to improve access to behavioral health services and reduce the stigma of mental illness. We are grateful that Sandra and Leon Levine share our vision and have made a significant contribution in this area,” CHS CEO Michael Tarwater said in a statement. “The Levine family continues to champion many healthcare initiatives for our region. We deeply appreciate their collective gift and look forward to the impact it will have on the many people and families who struggle with mental illness.”

At Tuesday’s announcement, CHS officials were joined by Leon and Sandra Levine, Howard and Julie Levine, Lori and Eric Sklut; and Alfred and Amy Levine Dawson, who celebrated the gift in honor of their daughter and sister. Mindy Ellen Levine died in 1988 at age 25 after an extended illness.

“We are pleased to honor Mindy in such a meaningful way and to support Carolinas HealthCare System as it focuses on this critical aspect of healthcare services,” Leon Levine said Tuesday.

“Mindy loved the open air,” he added. “How fitting that the building design takes advantage of natural elements known to positively impact healing.”

The newly renamed Mindy Ellen Levine Behavioral Health Center treats adults in crisis because of acute psychiatric conditions, from depression and anxiety to post-traumatic stress and schizophrenia.

## Levine family’s foundations give \$3 million for Davidson psychiatric hospital

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The Leon Levine Foundation and the children of Leon and Sandra Levine have donated \$3 million for Carolinas HealthCare System’s psychiatric hospital in Davidson, which opened in April.

Announcing the gift Tuesday, hospital officials said the 66-bed hospital will be named for the Levines’ daughter, Mindy Ellen Levine, who died in 1988 at the age of 25 after an extended illness. The name will be Mindy Ellen Levine Behavioral Health Center of Carolinas HealthCare System.

The Levine Foundation is named for Leon Levine, founder of the Family Dollar stores, and his wife, Sandra. Joining in the gift for the psychiatric hospital are their surviving children and their spouses, Howard and Julie Levine, Lori and Eric Sklut and Alfred and Amy Levine Dawson, through their foundations.

Hospital officials said the money will be used “to support future facility enhancements, programmatic development, patient and staff education and clinical research projects.”

The Levine foundation has previously made substantial gifts to Carolinas HealthCare, including \$20 million to create Levine Cancer Institute and \$10 million for Levine Children’s Hospital in Charlotte.