

# Preserving and Honoring the Legacy of WWII Medical Efforts

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## Background

James A. Conner and Michael L. Mason, who served in the 12<sup>th</sup> General Hospital Unit during World War II, donated their papers to the library, which were processed and digitized. The library also created an interactive digital exhibit. To draw attention to these resources that promote the legacy of this prestigious medical corps, a team comprised of individuals from different departments of the library embarked upon a multi-faceted outreach mission in May of 2019.

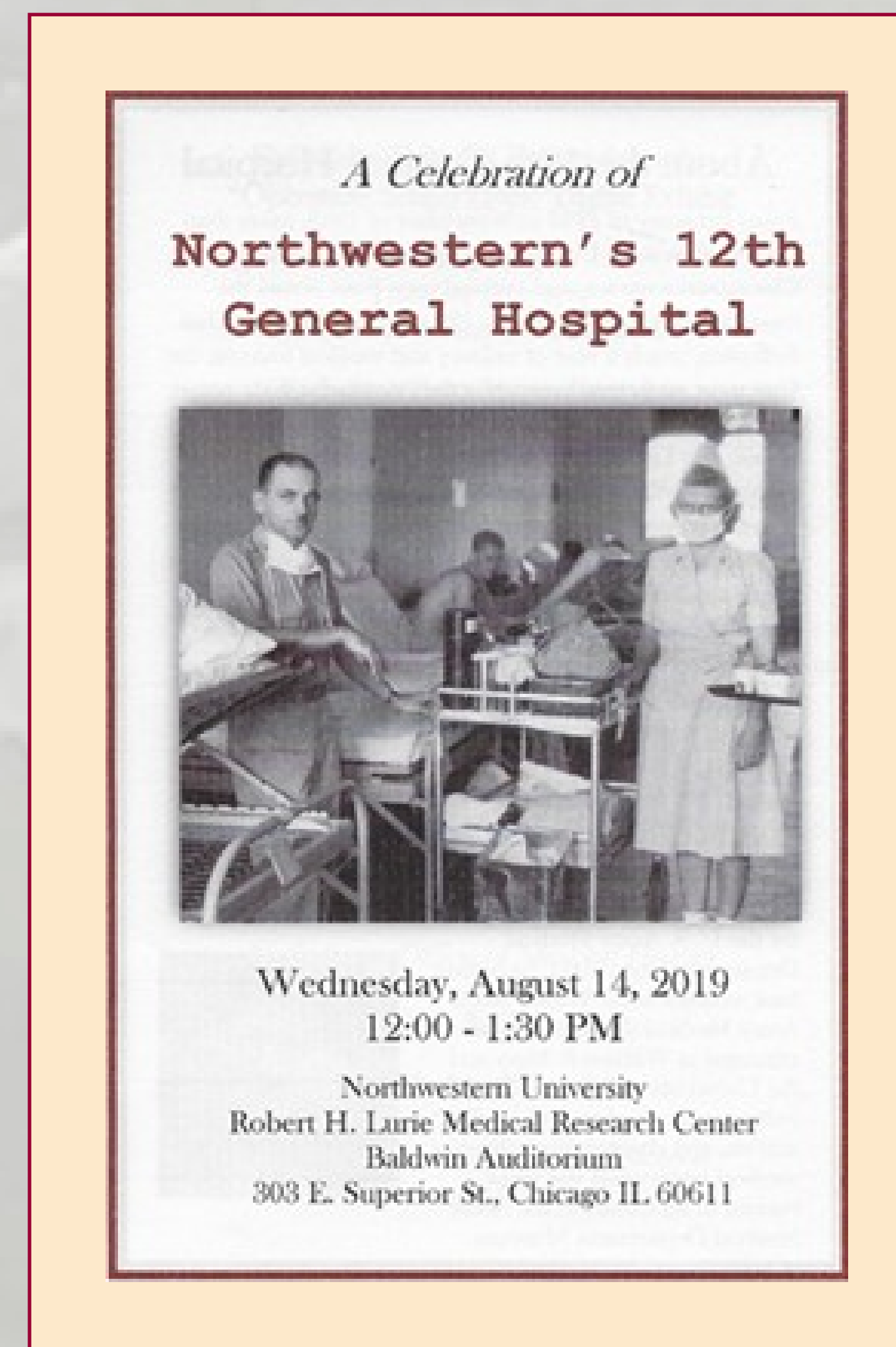
## Description

Over the course of three months, the team planned a variety of endeavors that ranged from publicizing the exhibit through social media and physical and digital signage, to securing an expert on military medicine to come speak at the inauguration of the exhibit, to performing genealogical research to find relatives of those who served to both attend and participate in the event. Members of the team called the descendants that could be located in addition to writing personalized notes on specially designed stationery. The team also created a five-panel traveling banner display to be unveiled at the lunchtime speaker event and arranged for it to be shown in locations in the Chicago area. Following the speaker, the library co-hosted an open house where visitors could see the 12<sup>th</sup> General Hospital materials. In collaboration with the communications department, the library pushed for these initiatives to be covered by the campus media as well as by the *Chicago Tribune* and NPR.

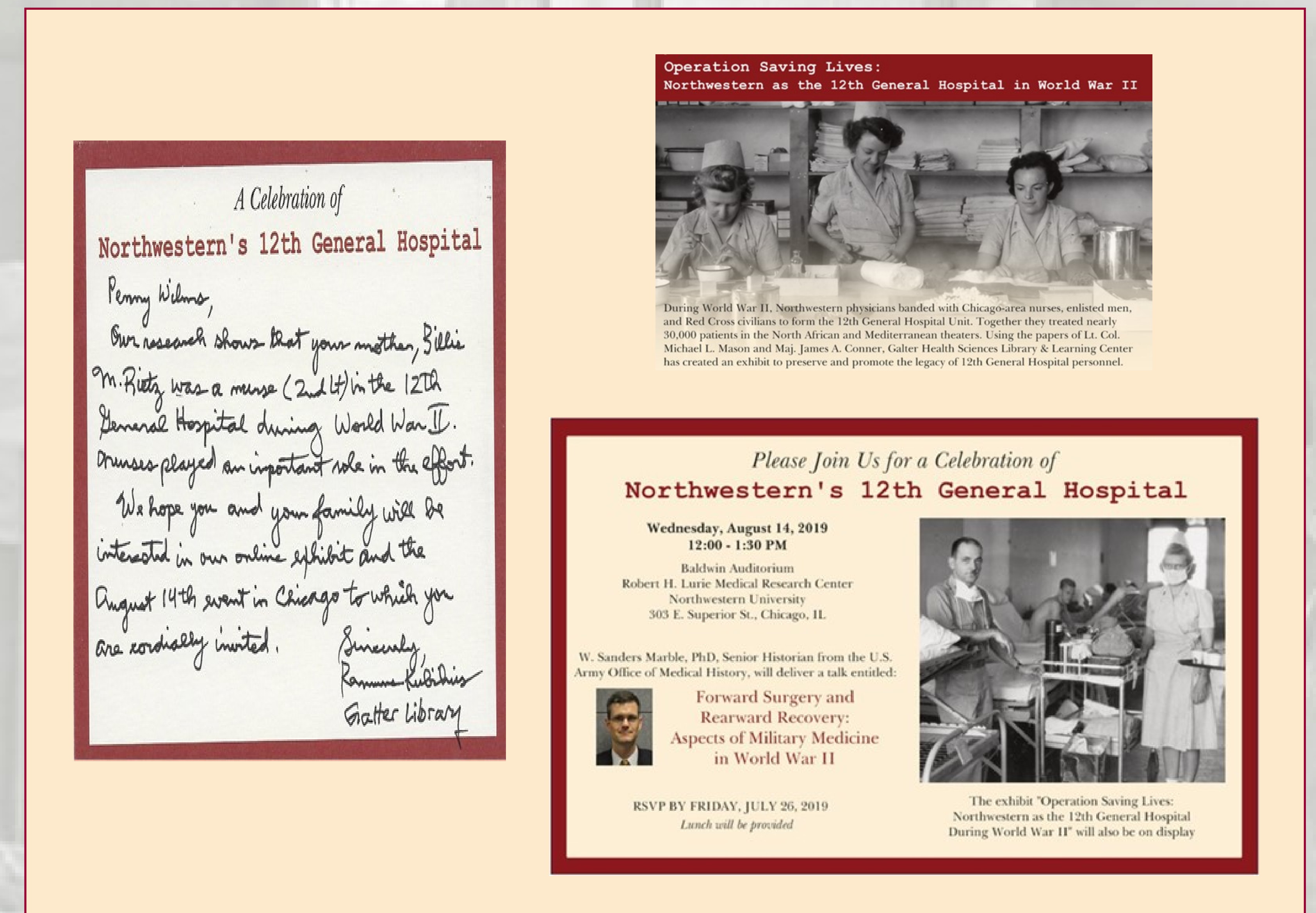
## Outcomes

More than 150 individuals attended the speaker event in-person and remotely from across the country. There has been an increase of reference requests about the 12<sup>th</sup> General Hospital Collection, and the traveling banner exhibits were displayed at the First Division Museum at Cantigny.

The library has since used some of the tactics it employed to accentuate the 12<sup>th</sup> General Hospital Collection like the traveling banner exhibit to highlight other special collections projects. It has also learned several lessons such as the importance of communicating frequently as a team and deciding on design choices early in the process when managing a large-scale outreach campaign.



Program that included schedule of events, information about the collection, links to digital resources, and suggestions of how to support living veterans



Invitation suite designed with VistaPrint



Family of 12th General Hospital Unit members recollect about their loved one's experiences



Presenting clips from an Army Nursing Corps interview with Katherine Baltz Hayes, Chief Nurse, edited with Adobe Premier Pro and captioned for 508 compliance



Sharing materials with event attendees at an open house



Coverage of the event in the *Chicago Tribune*



Banner exhibit, documenting the medical and military pursuits of the 12<sup>th</sup> General Hospital Unit, were created in PowerPoint and transferred to VistaPrint. These banners are on display in the library have been shown at other institutions.