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Celina Holson as
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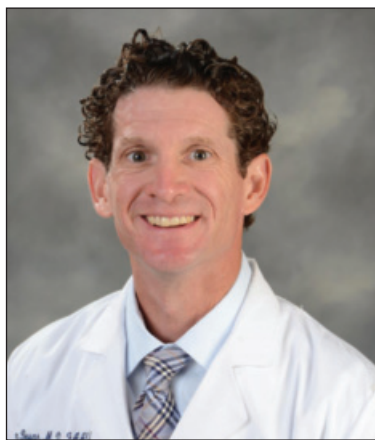
Hospital NewsTM and HEALTHCARE REPORT

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THE REGION'S MONTHLY NEWSPAPER FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS & PHYSICIANS

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Emergency/ Trauma Medicine



Dr. Evan Boyar

Broward Health Expects the Unexpected 24/7 Emergency and Trauma Expertise

BY BARBARA R. FALLON

Anyone who has ever channel surfed has caught a made-for-TV medical drama where ER doctors do everything from open heart surgery to handling security incidents to curing exotic diseases in a single episode.

Evan Boyar, M.D., MSE, FAAEM, Chief of Staff for Broward Health North and District Chief of Emergency Medicine at Broward Health, describes a more accurate account of what it's like in a high capacity hospital Emergency Department that from minute to minute may involve life-threatening trauma care, pandemic medicine protocols, emergency planning, weather and environmental related awareness, clinical teamwork, safety education; and, of course round-the-clock compassionate high-tech care for anyone from infants to seniors who needs sophisticated, immediate expertise after suffering a trauma. It's the stuff that can make the TV storyline seem tame.

Continued on page 13

Healthcare Construction/Real Estate

New Cancer Center to Augment World-Class Care

BY LOIS THOMSON

Memorial Healthcare System has been providing world-class care to patients for decades, and now future patients seeking care can look forward to a consolidation of those services when the new Memorial Cancer Institute is completed. According to Mark Greenspan, the purpose of this facility, which is currently under construction, is to coordinate all of the cancer care under one roof.

As he explained, "Care was being provided in multiple facilities, so the purpose of the project is to create a consolidation of care, bringing together our experts in cancer care, and creating a healing environment for the patients. It will help to ease their burden during their journey with the disease and create a patient and family center healing environment where we can provide world-class cancer care. It's also where our physicians and clinicians can collaborate, and where the patients have the amenities to make their journey easier."

Greenspan, director of construction and design services at Memorial Healthcare

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(l-r) Mark Greenspan, director of construction and design services, and Dr. Brian Hunis, medical director of oncology and hematology, Memorial Healthcare System

Feeding Baby When Formula Is Hard to Come By

BY ANIRUDDH SETYA, MD, FAAP

Formula shortages and empty store shelves have sent parents and caregivers into a panic. Some are stocking up with help from family and friends while others struggle to buy just one can.

Problems with the formula supply began when an Abbott Nutrition facility abruptly closed after Similac, Alimentum, and EleCare formulas were suspected of bacterial contamination. This led to a shortage of almost all infant formulas across the United States.

The Reliance on Formula

Breastfeeding is not something we can take for granted. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), only about a quarter of U.S. infants born in 2017 were exclusively breastfed during their first six months. There are many reasons why a mother won't or can't nurse. Maternal illness, absence or an infant's own intolerance are some examples. And if a mother has to stop nursing temporarily, it can be difficult to resume breastfeeding exclusively.

Infants and children with artificial feeding tubes, metabolic disorders or protein allergies may not thrive on breast milk and require specialized formulas, which are limited.

Alternative approaches, including those suggested on the internet, can be harmful to infants. For instance, adding extra water to the formula is dangerous. During the first 1,000 days of life, nutrition is vital for a child's health and development. Powdered infant



Dr. Aniruddh Setya

Continued on page 10

Malpractice



Julie Danna

Severity of Jury Verdicts Should Concern Florida Physicians

BY VANESSA ORR

In March of this year, an Iowa City family was awarded \$97.5 million in a medical malpractice case, the largest award of this kind in state history. This verdict, along with a new Florida House bill on the horizon, should send up red flags to Florida physicians, according to Julie Danna, senior vice president, National Health Care Practice, Danna-Gracey, a Division of Risk Strategies.

"Verdicts that used to be \$1 million are now \$10 million or higher," she explained. "What this means for doctors is that their premiums are going up because most carriers are running at a loss. For every dollar in, they are not bringing in enough to cover every dollar out."

Because the state of Florida did away with tort reform in 2017, it means that doctors are particularly at risk as caps on non-economic damages in medical malpractice actions litigated in Florida courts have been eliminated.

"Since 2017, we have completely lost tort reform in Florida, which a lot of doctors are not even aware of," said Danna. "When we had tort reform, everything was stabilized, and premiums were drastically lower. However, since 2017, when it was decided that it was unconstitutional to put a cap on pain and suffering cases, these rates have been going up

Continued on page 11



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Publisher's Note

WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

The following Publishers Note was first published in March 2018 just two weeks after the tragedy in Parkland at Marjorie Stone Douglas High School. At the time, both Carol and I naively thought surely now something would be done to control guns in the United States. Although we recently lost Carol's dad Ralph, we consider ourselves a lucky family. We have wonderful grandchildren, grandnephews and grandnieces – all of whom go to school each day. It is time to find a path forward, no matter how small. The majority of Americans favor universal background checks. We will accept any small step to save our kids, everyone's kids, from the terror of active shooter drills and children being murdered in their classrooms.



Our Inaction Has Been Deafening

Gun violence is a notoriously American problem – this cannot be disputed (so please don't try.) And once again, it's happened right here in our South Florida community, forever affecting our relatives, friends and co-workers. And each time an American massacre occurs, half-hearted declarations are debated about new bipartisan bills, laws and regulations ... ad nauseam. But then the gunshots fade, the visible wounds heal, the funerals end ... and we all forget. But I believe this time, thanks to a brilliant, articulate, still-traumatized group of Marjory Stoneman Douglas students, we are all being held accountable. Much like my 60s generation who affected the Vietnam era culture shift, these children are tired of being sacrifices to impotent politicians and 2nd amendment scare tactics. Does it make sense to say a person is too young to buy a handgun, but an AR15 is acceptable? Not one student has even whispered that all guns should be banned, but rather it's time for sensible gun control and effective mental health screening with regard to guns in the State of Florida and the United States.

As the students of MSD and #neveragain, asked so eloquently,
"How could it hurt
... to ban assault weapons?
... to reinstitute regulations that make it more difficult for the mentally ill to obtain guns?
... to save more children and adults like the 17 we lost in Parkland, Florida?"
Look in the mirror and ask yourself, how could it hurt?

Charles Felix



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New DCMA President Exhibits Love for Profession

BY LOIS THOMSON



Rafael J. Fernandez, Jr.

Rafael J. Fernandez, Jr., comes from a family of physicians – he's the grandson of a physician, and the son and the nephew of one. In addition, his brother, spouse, and one son are all physicians. (He also pointed out he is equally proud of his other son, who is an attorney in Miami.) But while some offspring might feel pressured into following in the family footsteps, that wasn't the case with Dr. Fernandez. As he commented, "I think it was in the genes, but I'm most fortunate, my family didn't force me into medicine, it was my own choice."

No, Dr. Fernandez wasn't forced but rather has shown a love for the profession, as evidenced by the fact that he took over as president of the Dade County Medical Association in June. He said that process began a few years prior when he was invited to be a representative from the South District for the DCMA. "I came on board during a time of transition," he said; and during that time a few highly qualified directors, along with several top physicians and leaders, "really re-energized this organization. That motivated me to continue."

He appreciates the opportunities the association has provided, such as participating in the Physician Leadership Academy, which he said exposed him to an area not normally received in medical education and training. The continuing medical education (CME) programs that allow physicians to maintain their licensure in Florida have also been expanded. Additionally, the organization's journal was reborn as a peer review journal, *Miami Medicine*, allowing both students and residents, as well as physicians, to publish their research to educate the patients, community in general, and physicians.

Finally, Dr. Fernandez said he would be remiss not to recognize the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic the past two years, which has been stressful to everyone associated with healthcare. The DCMA sought to get Personal Protective Equipment for family members of physicians who were on the front lines, taking care of the sick but then going home and possibly exposing their own family. "They were able to get a grant to manage some things like that for family members. The physical and mental health of physicians has also been taxed as a result of the pandemic, something DCMA is assisting physicians with through the development of a Wellness Program. Those kinds of accomplishments are what really motivated me to continue forward in this organization."

For those reasons, Dr. Fernandez stated some of the things he hopes to accomplish as president: "I'd like to reach out to both members and physicians who are not members. To the

physicians who are not members, I'd like to highly encourage them to join. For members, I want to make clear that I am not the DCMA; I have just been provided the privilege and the responsibility to sit in this position for one year. But the real DCMA are the members; and as members, our goal is to help physicians in Dade County address challenges that we face, to help educate the public and the legislature – regardless of party – and guide medicine in the county so that we can provide the best quality care for our patients and advocate for them in their times of need.

"I will do my best to get the message out there, to both the public and physicians, and encourage them to be active members in this organization."

With all of the benefits of being a member, why wouldn't the medical community want to join? Dr. Fernandez said sometimes people may not be aware of the organization. "Unfortunately, medicine is complex, there are a lot of moving parts, and it creates a lot of challenges. Commitment to the delivery of healthcare eats up a lot of our time, more so now than it did 50 years ago." He said one way to attract people who have been on the fence is to continue offering enhancements such as the *Miami Medicine* journal, providing CMEs so they can see the value of membership, and showing them the opportunities that are available, because Dade County is such a diverse community.

While Dr. Fernandez realizes the benefit of being part of such an organization, he emphasizes the support he has received along the way. "I want to make sure I point out that where I am today probably has more to do with the love and support I've had from my family, friends, and colleagues in South Florida. I also need to recognize my dedicated staff, who help me run a solo practice here in Coral Gables."

The DCMA can provide similar support as well.

For more information, call (305) 324-8717, or visit www.miamimed.com



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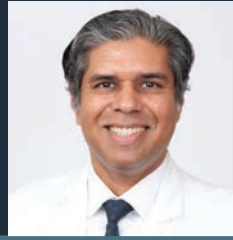
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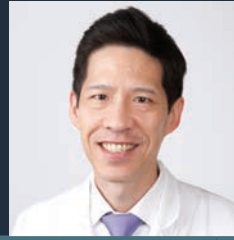
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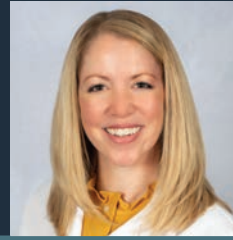
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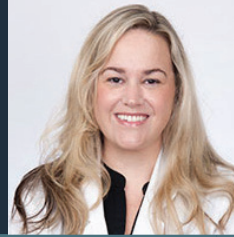
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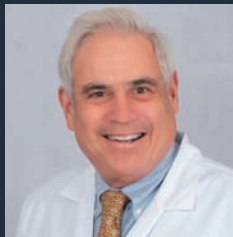
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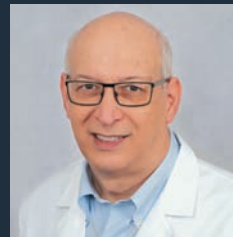
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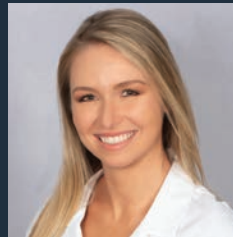
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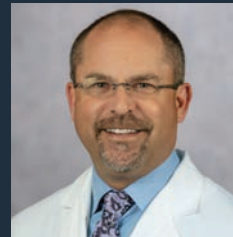
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Ready to Grow Your Career?

Miami Dade College Offers Nursing Opportunities for Education

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

Florida, along with the rest of the United States, is in the midst of a severe and long-standing nursing shortage. The shortage has affected the number of clinical preceptors as well as nursing faculty who prepare nursing students.

Population growth, retirement and the COVID-19 pandemic have all impacted the growing demand for more nursing educators. Colleges and universities are now recognizing the need for innovation to reduce the nursing shortage and attract qualified nurses as teachers and faculty. Miami Dade College is one statewide college that is taking a proactive approach to this problem.

"Right now, it is rather difficult to recruit and hire qualified, experienced faculty," says Dr. Tommie Norris, Dean of the Benjamin Leon School of Nursing at Miami Dade College. "There's so much competition with travel nursing as well as the gap of pay between private practice and academia that we're finding it really difficult to hire faculty who have teaching experience."

She says burnout from COVID is also an issue with people who want to enter academia. Most of these individuals who have a Master's degree or a Doctorate degree are working in hospitals already

where they are clinical experts and moving to teaching as a novice educator may cause concern.

To counter this, she says that Miami Dade decided to cultivate its own nursing faculty.

"One way we plan to do this is by hiring nursing experts in the clinical area who need the opportunity to grow into becoming a nurse educator," explains Dr. Norris. "We're going to provide mentorship and extra training for those faculty to make sure they understand the role of a nurse educator, how to be effective in the classroom, and how to communicate with students. We know that's something that is going to take extra resources from our side, but I feel like it'll be well worth it when we have those individuals who have that experience behind them."

Dr. Norris expects that it should take a year for these clinical experts to be trained as nursing educators. However, as they are learning, she says that they will teach side by side or work with



"We're reaching out to retired clinical practitioners and nurses who have a wealth of information to share with the students and we are having some success with that."

-Dr. Tommie Norris

another faculty member in a course to have that real live experience.

"The lecture component of teaching is the most challenging," she adds. "We'll provide classroom resources and online programs to help them become comfortable."

If nothing is done to alleviate the nursing faculty shortage, it will impact nursing students, and ultimately, patient outcomes.

"The fewer faculty you have, the fewer students you can take to the clinical setting," says Dr. Norris.

Miami Dade is also looking to recruit retired nurses to serve as adjunct faculty.

"We're reaching out to retired clinical practitioners and nurses who have a wealth of information to share with the students and we are having some success with that," says Dr. Norris. "We'll need to really get a robust pipeline of those adjuncts to come back each semester to help. There are many who still want to remain at the bedside in the hospitals,

but also really want to share their knowledge and expertise with students."

The other thing that's unique with Miami Dade is that it has strong practice partners—hospitals and community agencies that are partnering with MDC to give the students a broad and hands-on clinical experience.

"What we're finding is some of our practice partners are allowing their nurses to have clinical groups because it allows our nursing students to have an immersion in that hospital," says Dr. Norris.

Nursing education is a great career, Dr. Norris notes.

"It's never too late to go into a career in nursing education," she says. "What we have to do is make sure that nurses know the benefits of becoming a nurse educator, whether it's a full-time position or a part-time position. There are so many joys and rewards."

For more information, visit <https://www.mdc.edu/nursing/>.

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North America's Leading Patient-Centric Digital Health and Data Management Platform from Thrive Health Launches in Florida

Floridians take their health seriously and expect access to the latest digital solutions to make their healthcare experiences better. Did you know that 37% of patients who changed providers last year reported that a lack of or outdated digital tools was a leading factor in their decision? And that number increases to 61% for patients under the age of 30. Healthcare providers can no longer overlook the importance of regular reviews of their digital health platform.

Now, Florida healthcare institutions can access Thrive Health's leading platform for care management, health data interoperability, patient-reported outcome measures and evidence-based Care Journeys that prioritizes the patient experience with the latest in smart technology.

Thrive Health was founded in 2016 by a diverse group of patients, clinicians, researchers, parents, and students who



BY MARIE HORGAN

came together to help patients going through complex health journeys, working to put people at the center of their care.

Thrive Health is on a mission to make healthcare work better for everyone.

"Thrive is all about empowering patients in a way that makes life better for clinicians and health system operators. Having already helped over 10 million people through their healthcare journeys, we're excited to be growing across the continent." - David Helliwell, Co-Founder of Thrive Health

With Thrive, clinicians provide their patients with a tailored digital experience. Utilizing assessments, integrations with existing data, real-time intelligence for decision-making, and customizable support resources, Thrive aids the patient in understanding each stage of their Care Journey.

"We believe that technology as a tool can have an incredible impact on people's health outcomes and that it is still far too difficult to bring the most basic of

digital health solutions into the hands of patients. We aim to make it easier and play a humble role in enabling the amazing healthcare professionals we interact with every day to provide even more meaningful care to their patients." - Alec McCauley, CEO

St. Paul's Hospital and the Providence Health System in British Columbia utilize Thrive Health in multiple environments, including pre-admissions, general surgery, colorectal screening, complex pain, and perioperative quality improvement. Thrive has also been integrated to deploy care management for new and emerging treatment methods, such as with NeonMind Biosciences for their innovative intravenous ketamine (IV-Ket) treatments for mood, anxiety, and mental wellness. Thrive's technology has also been used throughout the COVID-19 pandemic for citizen communications, resource sharing, and self-assessments by numerous governments and academic institutions.

Thrive Health has partnered with emTRUTH, a California-based company that develops patented software using blockchain technology to power seamless data interoperability and increased

data security for Thrive Health's front-end, patient-facing platform. emTRUTH's API advances blockchain technology to address the challenge of how healthcare data is collected in siloes. They simplify the process of integrating and sharing data for care coordination and getting that data into the hands of the patient to own, understand, and manage - building a more robust view of individual health over time.

"The Thrive team focuses on delivering improved patient outcomes while reducing operational inefficiencies and re-admissions. Our platform embraces the rapidly increasing demand for hybrid-care and is also helping healthcare institutions across America make direct progress towards the Healthy People 2030 targets" - Michael Rhiness, Director of Sales.

Florida healthcare providers can learn more about deploying Thrive Health in their facilities by contacting discover@thrive.health or visiting our website at www2.thrive.health. Marie Horgan is Manager of Marketing & Communications at Thrive Health.

Quantum in the Community Plans to Invest \$1 Million in Grassroots Funding

Quantum Foundation is once again calling for local grassroots nonprofits to apply for its 12th annual Quantum in the Community (QIC) program. Each year, the program gifts grants to nonprofits that help support food, shelter, transportation, clothing, and financial assistance to improve quality health in Palm Beach County. In 2021, QIC gave \$1 million in unrestricted funding to local organizations that were harshly hit by COVID-19 setbacks, and to date has awarded a total of \$8.5 million through this targeted initiative.

Quantum Foundation's mission is to inspire and fund initiatives that improve the health of Palm Beach County residents. Quantum Foundation is a health foundation that was formed from \$135 million in proceeds from the sale of JFK Medical Center. Now in its third decade of community investment, the foundation has assets of approximately \$175 million. Since its inception, Quantum Foundation has awarded \$160 million to hundreds of Palm Beach County nonprofit grantees. Every dollar the foundation grants stays in the county to benefit local communities.

"It's a privilege to reinforce the good work that tends to underserved residents of Palm Beach County," said Eric Kelly, president of Quantum Foundation "We are arriving at another unique time where organizations and individuals are feeling the weight of rising rent, food, and gas costs as well as overall inflation. It is our goal to help these grassroots organizations meet ongoing and increasing basic needs in our communities in order to maintain and improve quality health."

A committee of foundation staff and board members will carefully consider each application. Strict criteria are set up for those nonprofits applying. Organizations must be registered as a 501(c)(3), have been working in Palm Beach County for at least six months, and have an annual operating budget not exceeding \$500,000.

In addition, Quantum Foundation will be accepting nominations for the Marie Thorpe Above & Beyond Award, also in its third year, in memory of staff member Marie Thorpe, who served the foundation for 22 years. The recognition will be given to an individual and everyday hero who exemplifies incredible service and sacrifice to improve Palm Beach County. At the annual QIC breakfast celebration on November 10, a \$2,500 award will be presented to an individual for their selfless services that go beyond the call of duty, and \$2,500 will be presented to their nominating organization, which can be a past or present QIC grantee.

This year's QIC committee is co-chaired by board members Ethel Isaacs Williams and Dr. Gerald O'Connor. All applications must be submitted using the foundation's online system by July 29, 2022, and grantees will be announced in the third week of October.



Photo Credit: Tracey Benson Photography

To apply, please visit the Quantum Foundation website at www.quantumfnd.org. For more information, please email quantumfd@slatkowhusak.com.



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MIPS Reporting – The Importance of Selecting the Right Reporting Methodology

As much as the right CCM Program will increase practice revenue and MIPS scores, working with the right MIPS reporting partner is also an essential element in maximizing reimbursement for the work that you perform every day. Starting with the 2022 reporting period, 1 out of every 2 clinicians will be penalized up to 9% based on performance in the MIPS program. With what's at stake and given the program is even more complex, you need a comprehensive solution to maximize MIPS points. This year you must earn at least 75 out of the possible 100 MIPS points to avoid penalty so it's imperative to have a strategic plan to understand the impact the reporting methodology has and to choose the best methodology and reporting partner.

A superior reporting methodology, known as Certified EHR Technology (CEHRT), has emerged and should be strongly considered for use by all practices participating in the MIPS program. Reporting through CEHRT dramatically improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the reporting process especially when done using ONC certified software. A CEHRT utilizes eCQMs (electronic Clinical Quality Measures), which are better at optimizing the MIPS points to be earned.

Unless you select a reporting partner that will help you earn the most points by leveraging technology to facilitate the ease, accuracy, and completeness of tracking and reporting to maximize your score, you risk leaving points on the table and significantly sub-optimizing your MIPS score. Reporting via a CEHRT, like Health eFilings, is the best approach because it optimizes the points that could be earned and therefore, maximizes Medicare reimbursements.

Health eFilings, a CEHRT, is the best choice for a reporting partner. Our cloud-based ONC certified software automates the process and does all the work without IT resources, administrative support or workflow changes. Health eFilings service is an end-to-end electronic solution that will save significant time, be a turnkey submission process and maximize the financial upside for providers.

Sarah Reiter is SVP Strategic Partnerships, Health eFilings, and Dr. Scott Rice is Chief Medical Officer, Your Doctor In Touch. For more information, please contact Richard Grosso at richard.g@ynit.us or call (561) 935-9000.



BY SARAH REITER AND
SCOTT RICE, MD, PHD, MBA, MS

MAKINGROUNDS...MAKINGROUNDS...

Maternal-Fetal Medicine Specialist, Kathleen Berkowitz, MD, Joins Cleveland Clinic Martin Health

Cleveland Clinic Martin Health welcomes board-certified maternal-fetal medicine specialist, Kathleen Berkowitz, M.D. Upon earning her medical degree at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, Dr. Berkowitz completed the OB/GYN Residency Program at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City, and the Maternal/Fetal Medicine Fellowship at University of California Medical Center/Irvine. Prior to joining Cleveland Clinic Martin Health, Dr. Berkowitz was Vice Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Cleveland Clinic Fairview Hospital.



Dr. Kathleen Berkowitz

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Let's Connect: ACHE of South Florida Spotlight



ACHE of South Florida Member Spotlight: Rudy Molinet

BY VANESSA ORR

As a registered nurse, Rudy Molinet was able to follow his passion for helping people. And while he appreciated being able to play an important role in patients' lives, he realized that a career in healthcare leadership offered the opportunity to make a difference in an even bigger way.

"As a nurse, I was having a one-on-one impact on patients and families, but as a healthcare leader, I could make a difference to an even larger group or an entire healthcare system," he said.

Molinet returned to school to earn his master's in healthcare administration at Columbia University, and worked in healthcare operations, marketing and sales, and strategic planning before starting his own consulting company, Artemis Synergies. He now provides services in all aspects of management, including strategic planning, management development, corporate restructuring and reorganization, executive coaching and more.

"I'm a novelty seeker; it's never boring because there are always new things happening," he said of the myriad roles his position requires.

Molinet also provides stand-alone coaching to healthcare executives at all stages of their careers. "Clients may include late-careerist CEOs facing challenges who value my level of experience or mid- and early careerists figuring out where they want to go and how to get to the level they want," he said.

As the first openly gay board member at Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale, FL, Molinet is also focused on the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and provides education on the needs of the LGBTQ+ community. "In this way, I am able to merge my two passions—social justice and equality within the healthcare system," he said.

An adjunct professor at Florida Atlantic University, he also teaches MBA and MHA students leadership, marketing and strategic planning, and has incorporated ACHE (American College of Healthcare Executives) into his role at FAU.

"One of my proudest achievements, in addition to becoming an ACHE fellow, is that I was able to convince FAU Executive Education to pay for the first year of each student's membership in ACHE," he said. "There are so many benefits, from learning how to comport yourself, to having high ethical values, to knowing what an elevator speech is, to networking with other healthcare professionals.

"No one is going to come knock on your door and ask you if you want to be a CEO," he laughed. "No matter how old you are, or your station in life, or what you think you know, every day should be a learning opportunity or experience, and ACHE provides that."

Molinet is such a firm believer in this tenet of lifelong learning that at the age of 62, after years in the healthcare industry, he decided to pursue his own ACHE Fellow credential. "I feel so strongly about the importance of the FACHE credential that I decided to become board-certified," he said. "I hadn't taken a six-hour board exam in many, many years, but I passed it on the first try.

"Not only has it helped my consulting practice, but it adds gravitas to my role as a healthcare executive," he added. "When you have those initials after your name, it says it all in terms of this industry and our profession."



Rudy Molinet

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Tampa General Hospital's Health Ambassador Program Is a Personal Guide to World-Class Care

The Health Ambassador Program reduces stress on patients and families, so they can focus on what matters most.

The Health Ambassador Program at Tampa General Hospital (TGH) provides world-class medical care with white-glove service. When patients from across Florida need to be transferred to TGH, a TGH health ambassador will handle all the details for them, whether they need help making a general appointment, scheduling a test, or preparing for surgery and/or an inpatient stay. Simply give TGH a call, and they will take care of the rest.

As an integral part of the TGH team, a designated health ambassador will:

- Schedule patient appointments and testing
- Arrange hotel and other travel needs if the patient and their family are coming to TGH from outside the Tampa Bay area
- Help patients with any business needs they may have during their stay
- Coordinate any follow-up care, imaging, or further tests a patient may need

Tampa General Hospital is committed to becoming the safest and most innovative academic health system in the country. It is working to achieve that by offering the latest treatment options available, utilizing evidence-based practices, providing full transparency every step of the way, and extending personalized, white-glove service to each patient.

"Patience, empathy and servitude are the basis of our program. We understand and respect each of our patients' unique medical and personal needs," said Lynn Stockford, RN, BSN, network development manager at TGH. "Our goal is to reduce stress, so patients and their families can focus on what matters most."

When K.C. Austin, a resident on Florida's East Coast, was battling the Delta variant of COVID-19, he was rushed to a Palm Beach County hospital's intensive care unit. Austin was intubated, and he and his family were soon facing life-or-death decisions.

"They started talking about him needing a transfer for ECMO (extracorporeal membrane oxygenation through a heart-lung machine), and that made it more real," said Danielle Austin, K.C.'s wife. "Luckily, the doctors had started the paperwork for the transfer pretty early on. When I got that phone call that he was being transferred to TGH, I just said, 'Oh my gosh, we have a chance.' The night he was airlifted, we sat on my in-laws' patio and waited to see that helicopter take off."



Dr. Abraham Schwarzbarg, Senior Vice President of Network Development & Chief of Oncology at Tampa General Hospital, sees patients in Palm Beach County and from across the Treasure Coast. When needed, he refers patients to Tampa General Hospital for complex care.



Lynn Stockford, RN, BSN, Manager, Physician Network Business Development, educates healthcare providers and patients on the complex care TGH's expert physicians provide and where appropriate, facilitates transfers through TGH's ambassador and transfer teams.

"The communication at TGH was unbelievable," Danielle said. "The fact that I was able to speak to a physician or representative every day, even when I was in West Palm Beach, was unbelievable. I never felt like I didn't know what was going on. I never felt that they weren't doing everything they could."

All of the right decisions were made at the right time for Mr. Austin, and that continuum of care at TGH is why he is alive today.

For a consultation, please call (561) 644-0125.

When It Comes to Patient Care – How Does the Patient Feel?



BY JAY JUFFRE

Let's face it, when people go to the doctor, the test, visit or procedure they are having results in receiving either good news or bad news. Several years back, I received a phone call from a customer with a unique request. One of this person's responsibilities was to oversee the imaging department at the hospital. "Can you get us Boca Terry robes for the patients who come in for their mammograms? We want to create a spa like experience." Well, I had to see this. Upon arriving, my contact showed me a renovated area that truly did look like an upscale Day Spa - complete with laminate hardwood floors, dim lighting, and posh furniture in the waiting area. He was right. The patient gowns we had been delivering for years, would no longer work in this environment. When I told him of course we would be able to help him, but that embroidered robes were going to cost him much more, he simply stared at me. After a few moments, he replied (and this is when I really got it) "Jay, I don't care what it costs, I care about how women will feel when they come here for a mammogram." Getting any test, including an annual cancer screening, can be stressful. In the back of someone's mind, they are always thinking, I hope this goes 'ok'. Focusing on how patients feel during these times is extremely important and goes directly to the human experience we are all trying to influence. Punchline of the story is interesting. About 9 months after we introduced the robes at this client, another customer, in another hospital called me to complain. "Jay, we are losing patients to hospital X, it seems they are giving patient's Boca Terry robes!" I kept the fact that it was my company providing the robes close to the vest. But it is clear, focusing on how you make patients feel, can have a dramatic impact on overall perception of your organization.

Jay Juffre is Executive Vice President, ImageFIRST. For more information on ImageFIRST, call 1-800-932-7472 or visit www.imagefirst.com.

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A message from our President

Technology Can't Care for Patients Alone

I think the response to the COVID-19 pandemic has opened many eyes to what has been predicted for more than 30 years. That is, our current processes, work environment, educational system, you name it, will not close the gap between the future demand for healthcare practitioners and the supply. Moreover, while technology might be a wonderful assistant, it can't empathetically hold a patient's hand!

Where have we gone wrong? In the 1980's while I worked for the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (now the Florida Department of Health and others), I worked in the Office of Comprehensive Health Planning and one of our responsibilities was to evaluate and make recommendations about Florida's supply of healthcare practitioners. Yes, now almost 40 years ago, we knew back then that we were going to need more doctors and nurses. Our growing population, our aging population all spelled out for us that we weren't doing enough to keep up.

The pandemic brought those issues into clear focus. We managed through the first round of COVID and by the time we got to the Delta strain, there was no more hiding what was so obvious ... the tenuous staffing situation had gone critical.

"According to an article in the *Nursing Times*, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that more than 275,000 additional nurses are needed from



Jaime Caldwell

2020 to 2030. Employment opportunities for nurses are projected to grow at a faster rate (9%) than all other occupations from 2016 through 2026." In looking at the source documents on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website, over the next decade it is projected that there will be 194,500 job openings per year for registered nurses. I dare say that the pandemic has probably affected that number as greater numbers of experienced registered nurses have chosen to retire or to make a career change moving from direct patient care to administration.

So, what is the plan for meeting the need for additional healthcare professionals? While the

statistics for nursing are more readily available, all health professions were impacted by the pandemic. It isn't only more registered nurses we are seeking, but all healthcare practitioners.

Some things are being done to attempt to correct the situation. Florida has recently appropriated \$125 million to help with nursing education. While this one time investment will help, everyone needs to be thinking about longer-term solutions. The challenges associated with healthcare staffing aren't going to be solved in one day, one month, one year, or with one legislative appropriation but, rather, it is going to take long-term effort to make a difference.

Over the next few years, the SFHHA will be working with our community partners to explore the challenges and to construct sustainable solutions that will allow us to narrow the future gap between the supply and demand of healthcare practitioners.

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Cover Story: Feeding Baby When Formula Is Hard to Come By

Continued from page 1

formulas mimic human milk, so every nutrient, vitamin, mineral, protein, and carbohydrate is measured for optimal growth and brain development. Diluted formulas can lead to malnutrition, electrolyte abnormalities, and other serious complications.

Cans of formula that are past their "best before" date should not be used either. The product could be at risk for contamination and protein disintegration, which can cause complications.

Homemade Formulas and Other Commercial Products

The FDA, CDC, and the Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommend against homemade formulas since they may lack essential nutrients for proper infant growth. For example, some recipes call for unpasteurized cow or goat's milk, which are not fit for consumption. And homemade formulas may not be prepared or stored in a sterile manner, resulting in a high risk of bacterial contamination.

Unfortunately, toddler formulas are not an appropriate alternative because, unlike products made for infants, they vary quite a bit in nutritional composition and may not meet an infant's needs.

Almond milk, oat milk, and similar products are beverages and not milk. Most do not have an adequate amount of nutrients, vitamins, carbohydrates, and fats, and some could cause other problems. For example, 10 to 20% of children allergic to cow milk are also allergic to soy milk. Almond milk should not be given because of nut allergies. Oat milk contains phytic acid, which prevents the body from absorbing iron, zinc, and calcium.

Although popular in some cultures, goat milk is deficient in vitamin B12 and folate and is very high in protein, which puts extra pressure on the baby's kidneys to eliminate. This should be avoided under 12 months of age.

Purchasing formula from overseas is a gray area. Formulas

from overseas are not regulated by U.S. standards and may not be completely hypoallergenic. Furthermore, most use metric measurements, making them trickier to prepare. I will consider an overseas formula for my patients but may need to verify the ingredients and modify the recipe for an individual infant.

Shortage May End Soon – Things Are Looking Up

I see a light at the end of the tunnel since President Biden invoked the Defense Production Act, which requires suppliers to direct resources to formula manufacturers before other customers. A second government program, "Operation Fly Formula," is using aircraft to import formulas that meet U.S. standards.

Abbott's Sturgis plant is set to reopen, although it will take time for the new products to hit the shelves. For now, Abbott is importing formula from its FDA-registered facility in Ireland.

In the meantime, it's important for parents and caregivers to communicate openly with their doctor, who can guide them to the best option for their baby. The North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Nutrition issued a chart listing several formulas that are comparable to the recalled brands. While the list doesn't include every formula on the market, it serves as a good starting point to research alternatives.

Parents may also be able to find formula locally by:

- Contacting their nearest Community Action Agency.
- Calling 2-1-1 for municipal referrals to non-profits that are providing supplies.
- Reaching out to Mother's Milk Bank of Florida which has depots throughout the state (milkbankofflorida.org).

Finally, while online research is helpful, it's essential to first speak with the baby's doctor before making any decisions about your child's nutritional needs.

Dr. Aniruddh Setya is a board-certified Pediatric Gastroenterologist with KIDZ Medical Services.

Miller School Researchers on the Trail to Unraveling Long COVID-19

Long COVID-19 syndrome, in which symptoms last a year or longer beyond infection, impacts about 30 percent of survivors of the coronavirus. It is a multifaceted systemic condition characterized by fatigue, “cognitive fog,” and often heart, lung and neurological complications.

Lina Shehadeh, Ph.D., professor of medicine in the Interdisciplinary Stem Cell Institute and Division of Cardiology at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, received a \$1 million grant from the American Heart Association to study long COVID. Recognizing the substantial public health impact and burden of this syndrome, the American Heart Association awarded three-year grants to 10 research programs in the nation with proposals for unraveling long COVID's etiology and molecular mechanisms.

“When you have an impact that is systemic — not confined to certain organs — you think about the circulatory system, since its function affects everything else,” Dr. Shehadeh said. “We have observed signs that the endothelial function of the blood vessels is abnormal in preclinical models of long COVID. Now, we are working to connect the dots and explain this cascade.”

As part of her research, Dr. Shehadeh is using a mouse model and human blood samples to interrogate a chain of events that may account for symptoms seen in people with long COVID. This chain

begins with virus-induced lung inflammation and defective cholesterol homeostasis, and ultimately leads to endothelial dysfunction.

The team is investigating evidence that there is an overzealous inflammatory response from the mating of protein spikes on the SARS-CoV-2 virus with low-density lipoprotein receptors (LDLr) on the infected cells. Central to this response is the formation of neutrophil extracellular traps (NETs), which are net-like structures composed of DNA-histone complexes and proteins. These form as the immune system activates an overabundance of neutrophils in the lungs.

While they form as an overreaction to real pathogens like the SARS-CoV-2 virus, they are also complicit in a number of autoimmune diseases, coagulation disorders and thrombus, diabetes, atherosclerosis, vasculitis, sepsis and cancer.

“In COVID-19, when these neutrophils are overwhelmed or defeated by the virus, they burst in the lungs, releasing their DNA material [netosis],” Dr. Shehadeh explained. “From there we think the NETs are carried through the systemic circulation and become stuck and then embedded in the vessel walls in the limbs and in the organs. This would explain the loss of normal homeostasis in the vascular walls and the tendency toward thrombus we see so often in COVID long-haulers.”



(l-r) Dr. Leo Tamariz, Dr. Shathiyah Kulandavelu, Dr. Lina Shehadeh, and Dr. Jose Condor

Dr. Shehadeh is working with Jeffrey Goldberger, M.D., M.B.A., professor of medicine and chief of the Cardiovascular Division, and Leonardo J. Tamariz, M.D., an internist in the COVID-19 Long-haulers Clinic at the Miami Veterans Affairs Healthcare System. Dr. Tamariz is obtaining blood samples and heart and lung MRI images of 150 or so patients from the clinic to sample the neutrophils and check for markers of netosis, while Dr. Goldberger is examining the MRIs and other cardiac readouts to assess visi-

ble vessel anomalies.

“This ties in with work we have done for years in studying battle fatigue in veterans, which can persist long after they return from the field,” Dr. Tamariz said.

Other key team members are Shathiyah Kulandavelu, Ph.D., a junior faculty member at the Interdisciplinary Stem Cell Institute whose expertise is in endothelial function, and Jose Manuel Condor Capcha, Ph.D., a postdoctoral associate who is spearheading the lab work.

Cover Story: Severity of Jury Verdicts Should Concern Florida Physicians

Continued from page 1

despite the fact that Florida is already one of the highest in the nation for medical malpractice insurance costs.”

Danna notes that while plaintiffs' attorneys used to pursue more lawsuits, causing a frequency problem, courts are now facing a severity problem, with attorneys going for fewer cases that will result in much higher awards.

An added concern for physicians is House Bill 6011, which will allow parents of adult children to recover damages for mental pain and suffering in a medical negligence suit. The bill will take effect on July 1, 2022.

“Before when a child died due to loss, the immediate family was allowed to

seek payment for mental pain and suffering,” explained Danna. “This new law allows parents of adult children who have no spouse or children to seek payment of those non-economic damages as well.

“This is going to cause even more opportunity for lawsuits; attorneys going after this money are going to cause chaos in Florida,” she added.

Court cases are also being influenced by changing jury demographics, which now include younger millennials.

“Back in the day we had a jury of our peers, but now these younger millennials, who are very compassionate, tend to be more willing to award plaintiffs money,” said Danna. “At meetings with

carriers, we now discuss ways to prepare ourselves to work with the millennial mentality versus a jury of our peers. You have to consider how that age group thinks when sitting on a jury panel, and how to go to court with the younger generation making decisions.”

While many Florida doctors have chosen to carry low policy limits of \$250,000/\$750,000, believing that attorneys wouldn't pursue them if there wasn't as much of a reward, with out-of-court claims settling at an average of \$400,000, this still leaves them at risk.

“A lot of doctors share their \$250,000 limits with their corporations and allied professionals, which leaves them even more vulnerable,” said Danna. “I strong-

ly suggest that they consider a separate policy for the corporation and put the allies under that. Doctors need a pure policy for themselves, where they are not sharing their limits.”

Danna advises physicians to carry a \$500,000 per claim/\$1.5 million aggregate per year limit to meet the national threshold. “We are seeing a lot of surgical groups going for \$1million/\$3 million,” she added.

For more information on policy limits, contact Julie Danna at julie@dannagracey.com, call (850) 530-3924 or visit www.dannagracey.com.

What's Next?

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BROWARD HEALTH IMPERIAL POINT

Dane Clarke, MD

Dane Clarke, M.D., has wanted to be a doctor since he was a child. "My mom told me that when I was 4 years old, I said that I wanted to be a doctor in order for me to take care of her when she got older," he said.

Dr. Clarke is the medical director of emergency medicine at Broward Health Imperial Point. He has over 30 years of healthcare experience, not counting the time he spent in the medical field shadowing his mother who was a nurse.

One of the turning points for Dr. Clarke came during the time he served as a teacher's aide at the United Cerebral Palsy Association. It was through his work with the children that he realized medicine was his calling.

Dr. Clarke received his medical degree from Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia. He is board certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine and a Fellow of the American College of Emergency Physicians.



Gregory Dubrovich, DO

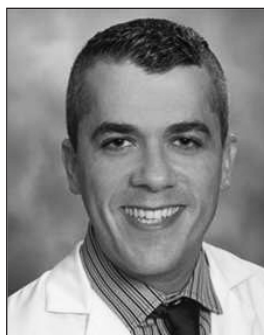
Gregory Dubrovich, D.O., is the assistant medical director of emergency medicine at Broward Health Imperial Point.

He was among the first caregivers at the hospital to get the Moderna vaccine when it was first made available in late 2020. "I've been on the front lines battling this since the onset," said Dr. Dubrovich during an interview with TV station WSVN.

Dr. Dubrovich was inspired to become a doctor by his parents who immigrated to the United States to give him and his sister a better life.

"Living in the same city that I work in provides great motivation to help the people of the community that I am so deeply rooted in," he said.

Dr. Dubrovich received his medical degree from Michigan State University of Osteopathic Medicine in East Lansing, Michigan, and is certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine.



BROWARD HEALTH NORTH

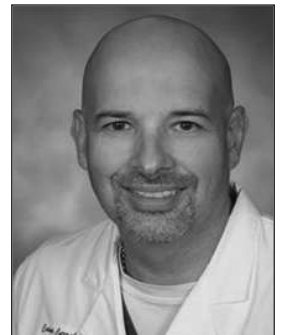
Cesar Carralero, DO

Cesar Carralero, D.O., serves as chief of emergency medicine at Broward Health North. He is committed to offering high quality patient care and working diligently to finding solutions that benefit patients and the medical team.

"As an administrator, I like fixing things, streamlining and improving processes," Dr. Carralero said. "This helps make the patient experience better and safer. It also creates a better work environment for my colleagues."

Dr. Carralero is part of the core faculty of the emergency medicine residency at Broward Health North. The program is one of the latest residencies that Broward Health has launched to attract and retain the country's best residents.

He earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Miami and completed his medical degree at Nova Southeastern University in Davie. He is board certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine and is a Fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians.



Dean Nottingham, DO

Dean Nottingham, D.O., dreamed of becoming like his father when he was a child. "My father was an orthopaedic surgeon who dedicated himself to helping improve the quality of life for others," said Dr. Nottingham, who is the associate director of emergency medicine and chair of the credentialing and qualification committee at Broward Health North.

Dr. Nottingham utilizes his expertise to provide exceptional care to patients going through different types of emergencies, including trauma.

"My father's lessons are my daily motivation to help others in their time of need and give back to the community," Dr. Nottingham said. He earned his bachelor's degree in political science from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and received his medical degree from Nova Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine in Davie. He is board certified by the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians and is a Fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians.



BROWARD HEALTH CORAL SPRINGS

Gary Lai, DO

Gary Lai, D.O., is the chief of emergency medicine at Broward Health Coral Spring and plays a pivotal role leading the medical team.

His journey to medicine is a personal one. "Having asthma as a child, I landed in the ER a few times, and I observed what the emergency physicians could do to help me," he said.

Dr. Lai is driven to do his best when caring for patients in the Emergency Department. "Being able to make a difference in the lives of our patients when they are suffering from a threatening condition is my daily motivation," he said.

Dr. Lai received a bachelor's degree in biology from Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton and his medical degree from Nova Southeastern University in Davie.



BROWARD HEALTH MEDICAL CENTER

Edmara Nieves, MD

Edmara Nieves, M.D., is an associate medical director in the Emergency Department at Broward Health Medical Center, where she focuses on caring for patients in the Level 1 Trauma Center.

When Dr. Nieves was a child, her mother was diagnosed with Guillain-Barre syndrome and that greatly influenced her interest in medicine. While going to the hospital for her mother's frequent appointments, Dr. Nieves became fascinated by the collaborative environment of physicians from different specialties.

"Using science and medical knowledge to heal and improve a patient's quality of life is a daily rewarding experience," she said.

Dr. Nieves earned her medical degree from Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Ponce, Puerto Rico, and is a certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine.



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CORY P. PRICE, FACHE - 2021 Regent Award

Cover Story: Broward Health Expects the Unexpected

Continued from page 1

Response to Unique Locale and Demographics

For example, because of its unique location Broward Health North, near Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale and Fort Lauderdale - International Airport, is the receiving facility for trauma or other tertiary care needs for major illness from the islands where advanced lifesaving technology is not available.

"International Medicine requires technology that provides clear communications and readiness to handle severe injuries and illness even while the patient may still be airborne," Dr. Boyar explained. "Also, our location which is close to highways and waterways, frequently provides scenarios for severe trauma from auto and air accidents and boating incidents," he said.

Leisure living in the Fort Lauderdale area undeniably includes the dangers of children and pools and near drowning or heat-related construction worker emergencies along with typical on-the-job falls, cuts and mishaps.

Additionally due to the demographics which include significant senior, tourist, and immigrant populations, there can be age and cultural barriers that need to be addressed even when dealing with life-threatening illness and injury such as heart attacks, strokes, broken bones, and

blunt trauma.

Dr. Boyar explained, "Older, frail patients who often suffer from several ailments and take a pharmacy of medications can present complex health hurdles and that may complicate a course of care when seconds count."

Also, language and cultural barriers can present serious consequences to a seemingly straight-forward care plan. Broward Health has considered the consequences of miscommunications and has a solution.

"Since we live and work in a melting pot of Haitian Creole, Eastern European and French-Canadian influences we use a robust audio/visual program at our fingertips to translate degrees of symptom severity, share stat consults on iPads and accelerate pre-hospital knowledge in order to understand patients and translate to them and their families and the first responder pre-hospital caretakers regarding the appropriate treatment," according to Dr. Boyar.

Health Watch for Caregivers

Naturally, all the above—and more—require a clinical readiness above the gold standard. However, maintaining that level of expertise and care delivery 24/7 can take a toll on the front-line heroes who can suffer from a type of combat fatigue. To avoid this, Dr. Boyar describes comprehensive

safety protocols to protect staff while on-shift and intense behavioral checklists to gauge their wellbeing in the aftermath of tragedies like mass shooting incidents, domestic, child and sexual abuse cases, and other societal ills that often present in the Emergency Department as causal diagnoses.

"Opportunities for recuperative time off, staggered shifts, counseling, therapy, professional intervention and coaching is practiced which encourages nurses, doctors, residents and all ancillary caregivers including our first responders in the field to follow wellness guidelines," Dr. Boyar said. "We coach our staff regarding mental health tips to check their own well-being for tell-tale signs of fatigue or clues of burnout and offer other opportunities to continue emergency careers without endangering their own mental or physical health," he explained.

According to Dr. Boyar, the field of emergency medicine is popular because it offers work schedules amenable to providers, minus the need to get entangled in the business side of a medical practice. However, when burnout threatens there are still vital hands-on administrative input roles for emergency medical planning such as preparation for weather related catastrophes, active shooter incidents and unexpected work calamities. An annual hazard vulnerability check is mandatory

and regular drills followed by analysis and a sharing of best practices help formulate process improvements and improved readiness. Broward Health has frequently participated in collegial conferences with other hospitals regarding lessons learned in the aftermath of tragic incidents.

A Look Forward

Looking toward the future, Dr. Boyar predicts an accelerated trend to marry all the stages of emergency and trauma care delivery. "Using diagnostic and monitoring technology during pre-hospital care to ED and intensive care through post hospital at-home care will enable us to elevate trauma and emergency care to a higher lifesaving level and improve patient outcomes. We will be able to diagnose earlier, treat immediately - often in the field - and monitor follow-up care with remote communications, advanced imaging, bio markers and telehealth options. We already converse with stakeholders to enable specialists on-call to evaluate rapidly, advance treatments and stimulate speed to care that saves lives," he concluded.

To learn more about Broward Health's Emergency Services, visit BrowardHealth.org/Emergency, call (954) 759-7500 or email ebayar@browardhealth.org.

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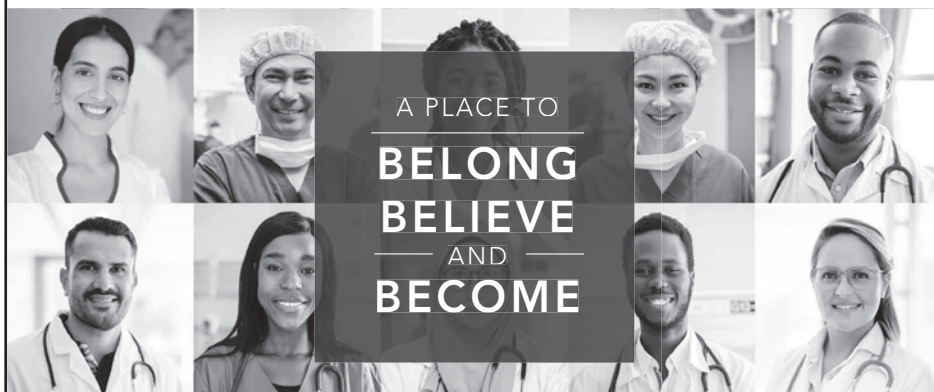
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Advances in Mental Healthcare Facilities

Healthcare workers around the globe have long realized the additional need for behavioral healthcare providers and clinics. With the ongoing pandemic, a significant layer of stress has been added to the public, in addition to the general polarization we are witnessing across the country. The results of stress, anxiety, and other mood disorders play themselves out over the daily news with pointless attacks and crimes that are incomprehensible under most circumstances.

The need for more mental health providers and newer facilities has never been more important. The increased need for this type of healthcare now consists of long wait periods for those in



BY CHARLES A. MICHELSON, AIA, ACHA, LEED AP

critical need. Waits of up to three months for psychologists and longer for psychiatrists are now the norm, not the exception.

Existing mental health facilities have quickly become overcrowded and obsolete. Modern facilities need to address this as well as the new philosophies and medications in treating mental illness, such as psychedelic therapy that are clinician-prescribed guided experiences.

Special consideration must also focus on behavioral health clinic acoustics, since emotional conversation can be loud, tearful, and sometimes hostile as part of therapy.

The design of behavioral health facilities

must also consider caregivers. Safety features must be incorporated into the design and appropriate barriers put in place to protect caregivers and other staff in the event of a potentially violent situation. Caregivers need to feel safe within their center, knowing they will not be trapped.

Additionally, the design of a behavioral health center needs to have the appropriate spaces, as much natural light as possible, and outdoor spaces for caregivers to decompress and prepare for their next client.

As with any other modality of healthcare, changes and advancement require the appropriately designed facilities to best service our community, requiring updated facilities than those designed in the past. Mental health telemedicine is also one component of improved treatment. Better outpatient facilities need to be provided that offer a variety of treat-

ment opportunities under a single roof. Be it individual sessions, group therapy activity rooms, medical or drug therapies, the design of new facilities will enhance treatment through a warm and soothing environment.

As an architect, I have always believed that good design can assist with positive clinical outcomes. Our mental health outpatient facilities should be warm and inviting spaces, conveying a sense of respect to facility clients. The interiors of these facilities should allow the safety and comfortable flow of people without bottlenecks. As much natural light as possible should also be incorporated into the space, as the benefits of any biophilic architecture have been well documented.

Charles Michelson is President of Saltz Michelson Architects. For more information, visit www.saltzmichelson.com.

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Health and Wellness Programs Just as Important in Underserved Communities

The newest YMCA of South Florida location now open in the historic Sistrunk community of Fort Lauderdale offers facilities, programs and services the community said they wanted there. More importantly, it will become a community gathering place that will nurture the potential of our youth by providing positive environment and opportunities and create a place that provides complete health and wellness programs for kids, families, adults and seniors; afterschool programs, community events and meeting space; preschool; workforce education through Broward College; as well as making retail space available to encourage economic growth and create jobs.

One of those retail spaces will be a home to Holy Cross Health which will have a community health center to serve the surrounding community. This is all about creating an environment where the entire community can gather, get healthy and connect with one another. The impact will be transformational.

We also are bringing awareness to the importance of improving health outcomes for racial and ethnic communities. Through programs and services at the new YMCA and at Holy Cross Health, we

can also shine a light on how we can work together to reduce health disparities, which according to the Centers for Disease Control Prevention, are preventable differences in opportunities to achieve optimal health for people who are disadvantaged by their social or economic status, geographic location or environment.

The importance of encouraging healthy living cannot be understated. The new L.A. Lee YMCA/Mizell Community Center at Sistrunk will host more than 55,000 people annually, with the goal of providing social, education and health services to low-income families.

In our community, the Y is a leading voice on health and well-being. With a mission centered on balance, the Y brings families closer together, encourages good health and fosters connections through fitness, sports, fun and shared interests. As a result, more youth, adults and families are receiving the support, guidance and resources needed to achieve greater health and well-being for their spirit, mind and body.

The local Y here has been listening and responding to our community's most critical social needs for 100 years. Whether



BY SHERYL WOODS AND MARK DOYLE

Community Center. Prior to that, from 1938 to 1964, the site was where Provident Hospital stood. At the time it was the only hospital in Broward County that provided medical care to Black patients.

The YMCA has named this new center the L.A. Lee YMCA Mizell Center in order to preserve the community and center's rich history. Here we will meet the needs of the local community and strengthen the foundations of the community.

Strengthening communities is the YMCA cause. That's why, every day, we work side-by-side with our neighbors to make sure everyone, regardless of age, income or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.

Sheryl Woods is CEO of the YMCA of South Florida in Fort Lauderdale. She can be reached at (954) 334-9622.

Mark Doyle is President and CEO of Holy Cross Health. He can be reached at mark.doyle@holy-cross.com.

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Cover Story: New Cancer Center to Augment World-Class Care

Continued from page 1

System, has been responsible for managing the design and construction of this project, as well as all projects in the System – which is the nation's fifth-largest public healthcare system and one that includes six hospitals. "I have the privilege of helping to plan and execute these important clinical advancements for the community, so I'm proud of what I get to do. We have an entire construction and design department, and we see the projects from start to finish." He said the department represents the entire healthcare system and applies their expertise to the design firms, to manage and see projects from concept all the way through to transition and operations. "It's a great role for us to play."

He said Memorial Cancer Institute has been in the works for about five years, and he and the members of the team initially had opportunities to visit other similar facilities. "We looked at benchmarks and brought back the best we could find; couple that with the world-class care and services that we already provide, and that's how the project was born. It also happened by collaboration with our executive leaders, physicians, and nurses, as well as input from patients and families."

Greenspan mentioned that feedback from the latter groups is important because "first and foremost we're here to serve them. That's the art of what we do. We can't plan effectively without their voice in our projects. We're here to advance the mission of the organization and to create the care environment, and we can't do that without bringing together all those perspectives."

Having been in the works for a few years means that the COVID pandemic came into play right in the midst of the Memorial Cancer Institute project. Greenspan commented that the impact of the virus has been twofold. "We're seeing price escalation across all the construction commodities and we're seeing supply chain disruption in

terms of the delivery and availability of equipment and material. Those have been the most significant impacts we've had to mitigate along the path of the project."

He added, however, that he and his team have been proactive, identifying risk and monitoring it in an effort to keep the project on schedule. "It's been an area of focus for our team and our design partners and our construction manager. We meet about these issues on a weekly basis, and when things occur unexpectedly, we problem-solve and find solutions. We're definitely dealing with things we never thought we would be, but they've become the norm now."

The projected date of completion for the 121,000 sq. ft. Memorial Cancer Institute is spring 2023. Greenspan said the frame has just finished being built, and work has now begun on the interior. When finished, it will consolidate resources such as radiation oncology, breast oncology, and hematology oncology. There will be 76 exam rooms, 53 infusion bays, telehealth rooms, linear accelerators, a café, image recovery, a meditation room, and a rooftop terrace where both providers and patients can get away for a respite. In short, coordinated patient care will take place, and cancer research will also be housed in the new facility.

Memorial Cancer Institute, along with its research partner Florida Atlantic University, is already designated as one of only five Cancer Centers of Excellence in Florida. The designation recognizes providers that exceed service standards and excel in providing quality, comprehensive, and patient-coordinated care.

Of the work on this new project, Greenspan concluded, "Our time is invested in helping the community and in helping to provide care, so it's a satisfying mission."

For more information, call (954) 265-4325, or visit www.mhs.net/cancer.



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The Palm Beach Health Network Is Expanding to the Treasure Coast

The Palm Beach Health Network is pleased to announce the expansion of its award-winning services to the Treasure Coast. Plans are now underway to begin building a new, technologically advanced facility slated to open in Port St. Lucie in 2024. The 54-bed acute care hospital will offer specialized surgical services including orthopedics, spine, robotics, general surgery, advanced cardiac care, and diagnostic services. This expansion will allow the Palm Beach Health Network to extend its acute care health system capabilities to increase access to its services locally across Martin and St. Lucie Counties.

The facility will be the cornerstone of the newly developed Florida Coast Health Network, a sister healthcare entity that will benefit from the depth of resources in the Palm Beach Health Network. On the campus of the new hospital, the Florida Coast Health Network will expand access to leading physicians in a convenient location with the addition of a new medical office building. There will also be greater access to outpatient surgical services with affiliated ambulatory surgery centers through the Palm Beach Health Network's relationship with United Surgical Partners International (USPI).

"Currently, many Martin and St. Lucie County residents travel south to seek advanced healthcare services," said Maggie Gill, Chief Executive Officer. "With the future opening of the Florida Coast Health Network, we will be able to create a stronger healthcare infrastructure with high-quality care for the Treasure Coast community."



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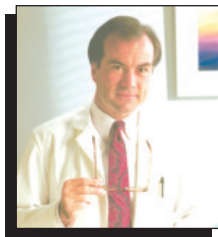


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Boot Camp for UM Medical Students Help Them Prep for Residency

The boot camp was initially launched in 2015 as a two-week elective for a pilot group of eight students, to ready them for residency training. Since then, word of mouth has spread about the value of the boot camp, with the result that the 2022 cohort of 50 students was the largest to date.

In 2023, the boot camp will become a four-week required course for all graduating medical students, and will include specialty components such as emergency medicine, internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics-gynecology, and pediatrics. The course will be directed by Gauri Agarwal, M.D., associate dean of curriculum; Alecia Stein, M.D., director of simulation education; and Paul Mendez, M.D., director of clinical skills. Faculty members from the Departments of Medicine, Anesthesiology, Radiology, and Medical Education, and the Division of Emergency Medicine, will also contribute to the lessons in a voluntary role.

"The goal is to provide students greater confidence in beginning their internship year by preparing [them] to communicate effectively in challenging scenarios with standardized

patients, to handle acute emergencies using high-fidelity simulations at the Gordon Center, to prepare for the professionalism required of residency training, and to consolidate the knowledge gained over four years of medical school," Dr. Agarwal said.

Students taking the course can expect an interactive experience, performing simulations, procedure labs, and standardized patient sessions in "real" scenarios that they will encounter in residency.

A favorite of the students has been emergency scenarios in which they are the first person in the room and must make an assessment and begin initial management, exercising a greater and unaccustomed level of independence. They also practice communication scenarios they may never have encountered, such as significant medical errors or informing a family member of a patient's death.

"I had been waiting for an experience like this throughout medical school," said Daniel Beckerman, a fourth-year student. "To be challenged with working effectively as a team to navigate common yet extremely consequential scenarios is important. I am glad the Miller School is leveraging the resources available to them through the Gordon Center to improve the way medical education is delivered, and hope they find more ways to integrate this type of learning into the new curriculum."

The Department of Medical Education has been taking notes throughout the boot camps, with an eye to the course's launch in 2023. Many of the popular boot camp lessons will remain as part of the course curriculum, while coverage will broaden to encompass other needed areas and give students the best experience.

"We will have the time to create specialty paths within the course so students specializing in certain areas can add those skill sets," Dr. Agarwal said. "We also hope to add an interprofessional piece that existed before the pandemic, training with fellow nursing and physical therapy students."

"The ultimate goal of the NextGenMD curriculum is to create transformational leaders in medicine, but the most immediate goal at graduation is ensuring that our students take outstanding care of their patients in residency and are prepared well for that transition to more independent practice."



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ElderCare Update in South Florida...ElderCare Update in South

Holy Cross Health AgeWell Center Focusing on Social Interaction and Wellness as Key to a Healthy Senior Life



The Holy Cross Health AgeWell Center opened its doors in September 2021 as a comprehensive, collaborative primary care practice focused on well-being and social interaction. With a Family Physician and a Geriatrician on staff providing primary care services, the AgeWell Center also includes a clinical pharmacist, licensed social worker, concierge service and care management to round out their care team.

The team at the AgeWell Center firmly believes that healthy activities and social interaction are crucial for seniors to live their best life. Patients with Medicare or Medicare Advantage insurance and are a patient of either the AgeWell Center or any Holy Cross Health Primary Care Provider are eligible to participate in all activities and classes at no cost. In-person yoga, chair yoga, Zumba, balance, support groups and tech classes are just some of the activities that are now available in person at the AgeWell Center. Additional social events such as Trivia and Bingo have also begun and have been positively received by patients.

The AgeWell Center continues to take new patients with Medicare or Medicare Advantage insurance, and same-day appointments are available for established patients. In addition to primary care services, classes and social activities, patients have access to multiple other services within the Holy Cross HealthPlex. Services such as lab, imaging, women's health, physical therapy, spa, medical massage and the Blessed Bistro Café are all available within the same building.

*The AgeWell Center is located in the Holy Cross HealthPlex at 1000 NE 56th St, Fort Lauderdale, FL.
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Alan Oliver Named Chief Operating Officer for Gastro Health

Alan Oliver has been named chief operating officer for Gastro Health.

Alan's leadership acumen and healthcare operations expertise make him a natural match for Gastro Health and its upward trajectory. During his distinguished career, Alan spent 22 years with Mednax where he held several roles there including serving as chief operating officer, as well as chief financial officer, chief administrative officer, and president of their national medical group.

Oliver graduated Summa Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree in business administration in accounting from Temple University and a master's degree in accounting and finance with a minor in health services administration from Nova Southeastern University. His professional affiliations include memberships within the Florida Hospital Association Political Action Committee, American College of Healthcare Executives, and Healthcare Financial Management Association.



Alan Oliver

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center Appoints Tiffany Berry to the Position of Chief Financial Officer

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center names Tiffany Berry as its new Chief Financial Officer.

Berry comes to Palm Beach Gardens with 20 years of healthcare financial leadership experience. Most recently, she served as the CFO of Northwest Health-Porter Hospital, a 301-bed hospital with multiple campuses in Indiana. Prior to that, she served in various other healthcare leadership roles where she successfully led the evaluation and turnaround of a surgical hospital, prepared and coordinated annual budgets and collaborated on the development of new service lines.

Berry received her Bachelor's Degree from Austin Peay State University in Business Administration, and went on to earn her Master's Degree in Business Administration from University of Saint Francis.



Tiffany Berry

HCA Florida JFK North Hospital Welcomes Celina Holson as Chief Operating Officer

HCA Florida JFK North Hospital has announced that Celina Holson is now the Chief Operating Officer. Celina has been with HCA Healthcare since 2018, first as an Executive Resident and then as Associate Administrator and Co-Ethics and Compliance Officer at Largo Medical Center. Most recently, she provided leadership at Riverside Community Hospital in Riverside, CA as Vice President of Operations.

Celina earned her undergraduate degree at University of North Carolina ñ Chapel Hill and obtained her Master of Health Administration from Georgetown University in Washington, DC. She completed her internship at Georgetown University Medical Center in the Quality Department and Atlas Research, LLC, a consulting firm.



Celina Holson

HCA Florida University Hospital Announces Madison Workman as New Chief Operations Officer

HCA Florida University Hospital announces Madison Workman as the hospital's Chief Operations Officer.

Workman has a bachelor's degree in science with an emphasis in health care from the University of Florida. Additionally, he holds a master's degree in healthcare administration from the University of Florida and is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.



Madison Workman

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WHAT'S NEW... WHAT'S NEW...WHAT'S NEW...

Broward Health Imperial Point Dedicates 'Tree of Life' in Celebration of Nurses Week

To kick off National Nurses Week, Broward Health Imperial Point celebrated with a tree planting and dedication ceremony to honor and recognize the committed and caring team of nurses at the Fort Lauderdale hospital.

A *lignum vitae*, also known as the "tree of life," was planted at the hospital's main entrance with nurses from various departments taking turns adding dirt to ground the sapling. The tree is a native species of Florida and is known for its combination of toughness, resiliency and adaptability, which is representative of nurses' career qualities.

"Remember, that the strongest trees have weathered the greatest storms just as nurses have over the last two years," said Netonua Reyes, MSN, chief nursing officer at Broward Health Imperial Point. "This has made us stronger with deeper roots that anchor us here, where we can grow in our professional practice of nursing."

The tree will forever represent nurses at Broward Health. Its roots spread out in all directions, as well as its branches, symbolizing how the health system is connected to the diverse community it serves. The trunk represents a single unit, linking healthcare providers together for years to come and providing nourishment, shade and shelter, just as nurses do.

"We specifically chose this tree because of its adaptability and individuality," said Rachel Chavez, RN, manager of the progressive care unit at Broward Health Imperial Point. "Every tree is unique just like our nurses."

"We all grow in different directions and will grow around something if it gets in our way," she said. "The roots that we have planted remind us that to grow, we need to be grounded, and no matter how high we go, our roots will offer us stability."



Netonua Reyes, MSN, chief nursing officer at Broward Health Imperial Point and Rachel Chavez, RN, manager of the progressive care unit at Broward Health Imperial Point

The Pap Corps Donates \$3.5 Million to Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center



The Pap Corps Board

You can't keep champions down! Rebounding from COVID-19, The Pap Corps Champions for Cancer Research (www.thepapcorps.org) came back full swing with their fundraising for the 2021/2022 fiscal year. The nonprofit recently donated \$3.5 million to Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center. Almost 300 Pap Corps members, along with leaders from Sylvester, enjoyed a beautiful breakfast at Boca West, where the check was presented to Jayne Sylvester Malfitano on behalf of the center.

"I am so proud of our amazing members," declared Sally Berenzweig, CEO of The Pap Corps. "Your dedication and passion, especially during these past few years, has been such an inspiration."

Jayne Sylvester Malfitano, whose parents endowed the center, spoke eloquently about the special partnership between The Pap Corps and Sylvester, and shared several of the numerous scientific advancements that have occurred thanks to research, including the rise of precision medicine, which is an approach to cancer treatment that is targeted at genetic markers in each person's unique cancer.

Sylvester is the only NCI-Designated Cancer Center in South Florida, and The Pap Corps has donated over \$110 million during the past 70 years to support cancer research. To celebrate these seven decades of giving, Robert Weinroth, Mayor of Palm Beach County presented a proclamation honoring the nonprofit's service.

Lee Health Announces Alliance with Cleveland Clinic's Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Institute

Lee Health has entered an affiliation agreement with Cleveland Clinic and is now an alliance member of Cleveland Clinic's Sydell and Arnold Miller Family Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Institute, uniting Southwest Florida's leading health care provider with the top-ranked cardiac program in the U.S. to elevate patient care in Southwest Florida.

This latest announcement follows the previously established strategic alliance between Cleveland Clinic and Lee Health in November 2020 to enhance and improve care in Southwest Florida by exploring opportunities for service line affiliations and strategic initiatives to improve quality and efficiency of care through clinical and operational enhancements.

The alliance with Cleveland Clinic's Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Institute will allow Lee Health to continue to advance excellence in care for heart patients in the region.

This alliance through a new affiliation agreement with Cleveland Clinic's Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Institute makes Lee Health the exclusive Cleveland Clinic heart alliance member in Southwest Florida. It allows for the sharing of best practices, enhancing opportunities to provide new treatments and therapies to patients, as well as exploring cutting-edge technologies and techniques in cardiovascular care that will accelerate advances in treatments.



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2022 ACHE of South Florida Inaugural Chapter Appreciation and Recognition Event



Congratulations and a special thank you to the 2022 ACHE of South Florida (ACHE-SFL) Board of Directors and to the ACHE-SFL 2021 Healthcare and Community Impact Award recipient, Aurelio M. Fernandez, III, FACHE. (l-r standing) Peter Christiaans, Adrian Parker, FACHE, Zunner Rios, FACHE, Niurka Diaz, Enrique Serrano, Haroula P. Norden, FACHE, David Morpeau, Mari Pantoja-Smith, Neil Mangus, FACHE, and Kenneth C. Wong, FACHE (l-r sitting) Ralph Rios, FACHE, Marla Sanfilippo, FACHE, Jenna Merlucci, FACHE, Aurelio M. Fernandez, III, FACHE, Oyinkansola "Bukky" Ogunrinde, Kristen Palanza and Carlos H. Ayllon, FACHE



Congratulations to the 2021 ACHE of South Florida (ACHE-SFL) Board of Directors and Regent for their service, dedication and commitment. (l-r) Adrian Parker, FACHE, Jenna Merlucci, FACHE, Ashley Vertuno, FACHE, Zunner Rios, FACHE, Kenneth C. Wong, FACHE, Oyinkansola "Bukky" Ogunrinde, Ayana Stephenson, FACHE, Mari Pantoja-Smith, Haroula P. Norden, FACHE, Kristen Palanza, Michelle Marsh, Charles Felix and Marla Sanfilippo, FACHE.

HCA Florida St. Petersburg Hospital Nationally Recognized with an 'A' Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade

HCA Florida St. Petersburg Hospital, formerly St. Petersburg General Hospital, received an "A" Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade for spring 2022. This national distinction recognizes HCA Florida St. Petersburg Hospital's achievements in protecting patients from preventable harm and error in the hospital.

"We are honored and proud to have achieved an 'A' grade from the distinguished Leapfrog Group. This 'A' is a testament to our ongoing dedication to providing the safest, most high-quality care possible for those we are privileged to serve," said Elizabeth Rigney, MSN, RN, CPHQ, CCDS, Vice President of Quality and Patient Safety at HCA Florida St. Petersburg Hospital.

"As our health care system continues to feel the strain of the pandemic, I thank the workforce and leadership of HCA Florida St. Petersburg Hospital for sustained commitment to patient safety, day in and day out," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "An 'A' Safety Grade is an outstanding achievement, and one that is not possible without a 24/7 effort by the entire health care workforce to protect patients from harm. This community should be proud."

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Back Cover Story: Trulieve Announces PRIDE-related Activities for June

Continued from back cover

Last year, Trulieve donated more than \$60,000 from Pride Month 2021 product sales in Florida dispensaries that benefited four Florida-based non-profits that support LGBTQ+ people, groups, and communities.

Non-profit beneficiaries in 2021 included:

- 26Health
- Equality FL
- Metro Inclusive Health
- National Center for Transgender Equality

By partnering with local organizations like Metro Inclusive Health and sponsoring Florida PRIDE events, Trulieve is fulfilling its mission to create profound economic and social advancement opportunities within the communities they serve by contributing to and developing partnerships with local organizations.

"Trulieve encourages and celebrates those who come from all walks of life," said Gina Collins, Vice President of Marketing at Trulieve. "We are proud of our efforts to create a safe, welcoming,

and supportive environment for members of the LGBTQ+ community and beyond. Ensuring that our patients and customers feel seen and heard when they walk into one of our stores is paramount to us as a company."

Trulieve also recently launched a PRIDE Employee Resource Group (ERG), with representation from each of their three Hubs and supported by an Executive Sponsor and Co-Chairpersons. The ERGs will plan grassroots sessions to facilitate personal growth and idea-sharing, providing a safe space and promoting free-flowing conversations that will positively shape Trulieve.

New Product Introductions

Trulieve also recently announced several new products. Trulieve's newest introduction of tasty edibles, Sweet Talk, launched in Florida earlier this year. These craveable chocolates and gels are infused with premium quality cannabis. Sweet Talk gives the goods that are sure to leave a big smile on your face.

• **Chocolate bars:** Satisfy your cravings with these tasty and therapeutic chocolate bars. It's a unique way to make your cannabis experience safe, enjoyable, and delicious.

• **Gummies/gels:** The answer to any sweet tooth, these gummies provide great flavor in an easy-to-use, on-the-go form.

"Everybody has a muse and for many, it's cannabis," says Collins. "With premium, mind-expanding concentrates and cartridges, Muse awakens your creativity, giving you permission to let go and give in to inspiration. This product helps you break the barriers of expectation. We free your mind so you can tap into the depths of your creativity without reservation."

Another recently launched product, Muse, is available in three forms:

• **Vapes** - Muse is your portal to creativity with a terpene-rich, full-spectrum, richly aromatic, flavorful, and incredibly smooth experience from fresh frozen flower, ensuring the relief is robust and healing in nature.

• **Concentrates** - Extracted in its state-of-the-art lab with fresh frozen flower, Muse provides a full-spectrum concentrate that is exceptionally flavorful and typically contains higher levels of terpenes than other traditional concentrates.

• **Live Diamonds by Muse** - The most recent innovation from Trulieve's state-of-the-art hydrocarbon extraction lab,

the only one of its kind in the state of Florida. The initial product release earlier this year of 500 units sold out within 24 hours.

With a variety of products available, some new customers may feel overwhelmed over what kind of products to choose. Collins offered the following advice on how to begin your cannabis journey:

"Many first-time patients start with tinctures because they're easy to dose drop-by-drop to help you gauge your tolerance levels," she says. "Capsules are also a great way to begin because they're similar to other medications and can be put in medicine trays with other pills. Edible gummies and chocolate are convenient and tasty. Vapes or inhalables are fast-acting for those seeking immediate relief."

Collins says that it's important you understand the potency of the products you're using and how your dosage will affect you. Start small and increase dosage as needed based on recommendation from your physician.

"Many Trulieve dispensaries offer on-site consultations to help patients obtain appropriate medical products and dosages to ensure optimal cannabis experiences," she says.

For more information, visit www.trulieve.com.



Florida Medical Marijuana Physicians Group

**ZOOM
Meetings**

**Wednesday, June 8 &
Wednesday, June 29**

6:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)



**A bimonthly Zoom meeting exclusively
for Certified Medical Marijuana
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Registration in advance is required.

Registration is **FREE**

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information to join the Zoom meeting.

For registration information,
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Trulieve CEO Kim Rivers Receives Green Market Report Women's Leadership Award

Trulieve Cannabis Corp. announced that its Chief Executive Officer Kim Rivers has won Green Market Report's Women's Leadership Award in the C-Suite category.

In the last year, Rivers has been the driving force behind several major business developments in the cannabis industry, including Trulieve's leading retail footprint in U.S. cannabis, industry leading profitability, and transformational purchase of Harvest Health and Recreation. Rivers set a new industry standard with Trulieve's release of its inaugural Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) report, the first issued by an American multi-state cannabis operator.

The Women's Leadership Award honors women in the cannabis industry for their work in several different categories including Activism/Politics, Social Equity, Cultivation, and Media.

"It's an honor to be recognized amongst so many talented leaders who are redefining this industry," said Rivers. "As the only female-led public multi-state operator, Trulieve has a unique opportunity to increase female representation and ownership within the sector. It's also important to use this platform to foster significant economic and social advancement opportunities for local communities across the country. I look forward to a future when female leadership is ubiquitous in the C-Suite."



Kim Rivers

Back Cover Story: Cannabis Spotlight

Continued from back cover

suppress many mental illness related symptoms. Educating seniors, who talk about its benefits over lunch, playing cards or at the pool is a vital step towards decriminalization of use.

What's your history with the cannabis industry?

Well, in plain language, I started as a smuggler. I spent 30 years in prison and had a lot of time to think about the future and wanted to kick off a medical revolution. I now have my own brand of cannabis "Black Tuna" which Trulieve sells in Florida, and I introduced a new, delicious strain, "Blue Fin Tuna" this month.

I worked in the media as a pitchman and realized I could use that talent to help change the attitudes of seniors toward Cannabis use after Proposition 19 failed in California because it didn't have senior support. In 2010, California already had legalized medical marijuana use but nobody made a real effort to educate seniors about its benefits when trying to pass laws to legalize recreational use. Lacking

the senior support, it failed.

I originated the Silver Tour which educates and advocates for decriminalization of pot and targets senior communities, at churches, synagogues – and wherever I get an audience in Florida – explaining the value of medical cannabis. Cannabis is a choice-better than pills – and Grandma needs to know about it to live her best life.

This has taken me to politicians and legislators, (not just in Florida but in Washington DC), where we changed the audience of pro-marijuana rallies from hippies to seniors in wheelchairs. I talk with doctors and farmers, in person and through the media, I campaign for the benefits of cannabis legalization with the main goal of getting the truth out about the benefits and getting involved with advocacy groups to get petitions signed, legislation introduced and passed to allow everyone to reap the rewards.

What motivates you?

It doesn't make sense that the cannabis industry is one of the fastest-growing, tax producing businesses and produces one of

the oldest natural medicines ... yet we still spend billions of tax dollars incarcerating users and promoting myths and misconceptions about marijuana.

Studies done to date about the effectiveness of cannabis use are so promising, pointing to the potential to help us live a better life, keep me pushing for the federal decriminalization of cannabis use.

What do you think is necessary to help move Florida forward in the marijuana/cannabis business?

Education. The benefits directed at seniors, like my Silver Tour campaign, have helped make huge inroads over the past several years. Seniors are advocates and politicians know they need the senior vote. Education targeting doctors and educators have led to Medical School research and teaching future doctors about cannabis medicine.

At the very least this state needs to have reciprocity with other states who have passed laws regarding medical and recreational use. We are a tourist state and legislators understand that leaking money to other states is a bad economic move. Nationwide, 18 states have legalized recre-

ational marijuana and 37 allow it for medical purposes with a prescription. Florida needs to get there now on both counts.

We need to stop limitation on volumes and retrain budtenders to sync computer renewal amounts to determine appropriate quantities. We need to limit alcohol and opioid abuse and talk about the benefits of cannabis and marijuana for people who need relief. We need to allow for home-grown weed. Bottom line is we need to decriminalize use, period.

Doctors, legislators, law enforcement, teachers and the public are getting on-board and moving to support federal decriminalization to remove all legal constraints to using marijuana, which confuses those who need it and blocks us from its benefits.

Trulieve has pushed the envelope and provides education and a variety of quality products. I think we've made a lot of progress and I am confident we are moving in the right direction. People just wish it was at a faster speed for those who need the benefits.

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Evaluating Formal Cannabis Educational Opportunities

BY DR. JEFF G. KONIN

In some of my previous columns I have discussed the importance of cannabis education to many different stakeholders if we are to see advancement in this space. While the term “education” seems simple to understand for most if not all of us, the diversity and quality of what is being taught in the numerous platforms can leave some even more confused than when they started. What about for those of you who already have a solid baseline of understanding of cannabis and are seeking continued professional development? Where do you go for educational opportunities? How do you decipher between quality and propaganda?

First and foremost, peer-reviewed and published scientific literature is always a reliable source. Yes, you should still evaluate and critique all published work, but the mere fact that a paper has already gone through some review process is a good starting point for a minimal level of assurance. Keep in mind the key term “peer-reviewed.” Just because something is published doesn’t mean it has been reviewed

by others for quality, accuracy, and an absence of bias.

From the perspective of live or online courses, they abound! And – they can be expensive! There is no single formula that can help predict how good the educational content will be when signing up to learn about cannabis. However, like all other conferences, there are a few guidelines that you can follow to better evaluate the course content ahead of time. Of course much of this also depends on the level of knowledge that you are starting with and what your overall goals are toward learning about a specific aspect of cannabis.

The first simple step is to review the promotional materials: website, flyers, save the date cards, etc. Look for professional quality, images, typos, etc. These are basic things that should raise a red flag. If you find careless wording or blurred photos, you might want to just wonder if the same lack of attention to detail will be presented



Dr. Jeff G. Konin

in the course delivery. You should also look carefully for the following components related to the course on the promotional materials:

Program and/or Course Title: As simple as it sounds, the title of a program and its inclusive presentation topics may provide you with a sense of the quality and competence of the course. Titles can give you a glimpse into the

scientific level of the content as well as the “low key laid back” approach to the delivery. This is not to say that you should always judge the book by its cover, but it is an easy starting point for a review process.

Learning Outcomes or Program Goals: A 1- or 2-day course can be themed and focus on a very specific topic such as the endocannabinoid system, or it can have a variety of topics that range from CBD and forms of application to the entourage effect of various cannabinoids. The choice is yours, depending on your goals of learning and levels of interest. While not everyone is an expert in using Bloom’s taxonomy to state course and presentation goals, those who do use such higher level of learning words such as “solving”, “detecting”, or “validating” reflect a deeper expectation as compared to words such as “identifying”, “estimating”, or “comparing”. Again, these are examples, but those who present more often and are tasked with writing goals and objectives will be more familiar with using higher level terms. It is easy to search online for an example of Bloom’s taxonomy of words. One thing to also consider is who is identified as the target audience. Be sure that you fit into this category or else you may feel as though you are in the wrong room!

Speaker Credentials: A series of alphabet letters after one’s name does not automatically translate to excellence at the podium. Credentials go beyond letters as they include accomplishments that contribute to the body of work in the area of the content being presented. We have all been to presentations where “heavy-hitting” named speakers disappointed us as well as listening to some of the best presentations delivered by speakers we never previously have heard of. It is also important to correlate the speaker’s presentation and know whether or not the individual has any potential conflicts of interest or biases in any way. This could influence the presentation and not provide you with a true reflection of the facts. Do your homework, ask around, have some familiarity with individuals as best you can to maximize your valuable time.

Registration Fees & Cancellation Policy: This can be a tricky area to consider. Think about it, if a course fee is very

low, would you not assume there may be a lack of quality? After all, we equate lower costing items with lesser quality products. Do professional development continuing education programs fall under this similar assumption? Yet, if the course was very high priced – as some are tremendously overpriced especially in the online cannabis space – will it truly deliver a valuable package to you or is it a quick money grab? It is also helpful to view the cancellation policy. Any policies that just simply don’t appear to be “user friendly” would raise a red flag to me. Life happens, and if companies putting on courses are unwilling to recognize this I would likely turn toward another program. Refunds that can be applied elsewhere toward a future course are good options, and refunds minus a reasonable administrative fee are also fare. After all, companies may have spent a respectable amount of funds marketing and promoting the course, agreeing to speaker fees, renting room space and/or AV equipment, etc. But any program that refuses to honor a refund in any manner within a reasonable time for such a request is simply not acting in good faith. Such programs operating in this manner will ultimately lose clients and word of mouth will spread fast.

Professional Credits Offered: One item to consider is whether or not the program offers formal credits such as CME’s or CEU’s. Programs that formally offer credit that has been granted by your professional associations reflect a minimal standard of review and expectations that inform you of a higher level of quality to begin with. This doesn’t mean there may not be less than admirable speakers or some with great knowledge and poor presentation skills. It does mean that some vetting process has occurred at least through a paper review and typically those looking to simply put on a program and make a quick buck will not go through the approval efforts.

This is just a snapshot of some suggestions for reviewing cannabis educational courses. All of us have different experiences and we play a role in helping to bring efficacy not only to the science and clinical aspects of cannabis integration but also to ensure proper, factual, and efficacious education is being transmitted to our stakeholders.

Dr. Jeff G. Konin is a Clinical Professor in the Department of Athletic Training in the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Florida International University (FIU) where he directs the Global Initiative for Cannabinoid Research and Education. To learn more about FIU’s cannabinoid research and education initiative you can visit their website at <https://go.fiu.edu/GlobalCannabis>. Views represented in this column do not reflect that of Florida International University and are solely attributed to Dr. Jeff G. Konin.



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SCAN ME

Back Cover Story: Marc Egort, CPA, P.A.: Helping Your Business Navigate the Cannabis Industry

Continued from back cover

a population of productive income-producing individuals who have not done anything other than use cannabis, which is available via nature."

Egort also has a strong opinion about the medical value of cannabis.

"There are other progressive countries out in this world that are doing tremendous amounts of research and medical advancement and using cannabis for treatments for cancer or degenerative diseases such as Parkinson's Disease, which my father was afflicted with," he says. "There's leading, cutting-edge research happening in the cannabis field right now, but I feel the United States is woefully behind in that arena."

One of the reasons the nation is behind is due to the fact that cannabis remains illegal on the federal level. That makes cannabis accounting more challenging.

"Cannabis is unique because it's considered to be—and is labeled—as a Schedule I narcotic in the United States," Egort says. "Since it is a federally illegal activity, it makes that unique from an accounting or

more importantly, from a tax standpoint. There are extreme limitations on what a business owner can use as deductions against the income earned from distributing or selling cannabis, whether it's medicinal or recreational."

The challenges that consultants or tax advisors such as Egort have is to help those members of the industry navigate the restrictions on what they can deduct against that. Even though, it's federally illegal, it falls under a certain classification. While IRS Code Section 280E is clear that all the deductions and credits are not allowed for an illegal business, there is a caveat cannabis businesses are aware of: marijuana business owners can deduct their cost of goods sold, which is basically the cost of their inventory.

This means they still must report the income. They don't have the same flexibility or liberties that businesses who are not operating under the pretense have as far as what they can deduct against that income. Therefore, their taxes are significantly higher than other industries.

While other tax consultants and

accounting practices are now offering services to cannabis businesses, Egort feels he has one great advantage over the others.

"We're a smaller, boutique firm with seven total employees, so we don't have the distractions of a larger firm where it's multilayered and multilevel," he says. "As a result, we're able to provide a unique perspective with the same level of expertise but with greater attention and focus for our clients. Our clients will never feel like they're getting bounced around from one professional to another. We all share the same level of expertise and resources. You're getting high value no matter who you work with in our office."

Whether you work with Egort's practice or any other firm, Egort offers this accounting advice:

"Always ask good questions and surround yourself with really good professionals who are embedded in the industry," he notes. "Those are the people who will have access to resources specific to the industry, no matter what industry it is, whether it's cannabis or anything else in healthcare. Also, be sure to listen, be open

minded, and have a positive attitude about compliance. Understand that your business advisors, whether they are lawyers, accountants or other business consultants, are all in your corner and are looking to help you become successful and to navigate a very highly regulated, challenging, and often misunderstood, industry."

Finally, he stresses the importance of working with professionals who you are comfortable working with. For example, do the communication styles match? Is there easy access to the professional—are they readily available?

"You should really decide what's important to you in the professionals you choose to work with," he says. "The knowledge base about a subject area is similar for every professional. So, you should decide what's important to you for a working relationship. The relationship is ultimately what matters. Cannabis is a relationship-driven business. That's where the value is."

For more information, visit www.egortcpa.com.



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Ayr Wellness Opens 47th Florida Dispensary in Clermont

Ayr Wellness Inc. announced the opening of its 47th Florida dispensary, located in Clermont, a western suburb of Orlando.

The new dispensary spans 4,000 square feet of retail space and is located near Clermont Historical Village. The store features Ayr's full line of concentrates, edibles, gummies, vapes, and a selection of high-quality flower, including newly launched Kynd whole flower offerings and Walking STiX pre-rolls.

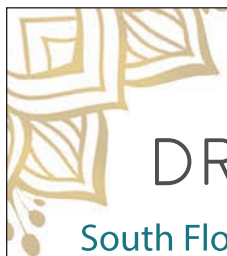
"We continue to open stores in Florida at a rapid pace, with today's opening marking 47 locations across the state," said Jonathan Sandelman, Founder, Chairman and CEO of Ayr. "The expansion of our Florida footprint, combined with the continued rollout of our national brands like Kynd, STiX and Entourage, positions us well to continue to capture market share throughout the Sunshine State."

Curaleaf Names Matt Darin CEO

Curaleaf Holdings, Inc. announced that Matt Darin will become Chief Executive Officer of Curaleaf Holdings, Inc., while current CEO Joe Bayern will launch and run a new division of Curaleaf developing a new CPG-based business model.

Executive Chairman Boris Jordan said, "When we named Matt president in January, it was a deliberate move to strengthen our leadership bench to support our growth strategy and build a succession plan for the future. The Board and I are all incredibly grateful for Joe's accomplishments during his tenure as CEO. He brought us into a new way of working and thinking strategically as a CPG company. His experience as a brand builder and CPG leader will be instrumental for our new venture at a time when the opportunities in the marketplace are only just being realized. We'll be sharing more on the new division and its role in our strategy soon."

Darin brings dynamic leadership skills, an entrepreneurial mindset and experience as a first-class operator in the cannabis industry. As a founder of Grassroots, he was a first entrant in some of the top cannabis markets in the U.S., including Illinois and Pennsylvania. Since joining Curaleaf in July 2020, he led the Central region, the company's largest by footprint and revenue. In 2021 he added the Southeast region to his responsibilities, helping increase Curaleaf's market share by 55%.



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Back Cover Story: The New Wave: FL Anticipates to Double Number of MMTC License Holders

Continued from back cover

all phases of large-scale indoor cultivation, processing, and retail construction, and aware of the many Department of Health (DOH) requirements is vital to ensure your infrastructure plan is successfully executed, delivering market share and return on investment (ROI).

Florida cannabis construction is unique compared to any other state. Many of the original 22 license holders have learned this truth the 'expensive way'. Due to the diverse and intricate set of codes, Florida compliance regulations, and existing property conditions, it takes more than a tool belt to design and construct successful cannabis infrastructure in the Florida market.

Having completed over 80+ retail dispensaries, offering 60-day, fast-track turn time options on retail construction, and finishing numerous indoor and outdoor cultivation facilities, SRCS clearly understands the challenges within the medical cannabis space and emphasizes a culture of 'communication' and 'transparency' which provide synergy and balance to our client relationships, according to Ryan Seddon, Principal of SRCS.

Building Relationships

"Our most valuable asset is the talented and experienced SRCS staff who contribute - both as individuals and team members - to the ultimate goal of a job well done," Seddon explains, "and that's what brings our customers back."

By the Numbers

According to the OMMU webpage, Florida has a total of 429 authorized retail dispensary locations statewide (May 13th, 2022 OMMU webpage). When you consider the active patient count makes up only 3.34% of Florida's population & future recreational use ruling, it is obvious MMTC companies are just getting started.

SR Construction Services is a turnkey, Division 1, vertically integrated, multi-licensed Florida contractor with years of active experience in the commercial retail and industrial cannabis market. Their diverse business model is focused on industrial, hospitality, retail tenant improvement, medical, and large-scale new construction and renovations.

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All referenced OMMU data found at <https://knowthefactsmmj.com/>



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Robert Platshorn

Cannabis Spotlight:

Robert Platshorn

Robert Platshorn aka Robert "Bobby Black Tuna" Platshorn is America's longest imprisoned nonviolent marijuana offender. Platshorn served a 30-year sentence for smuggling pot into Florida. He currently offers some of the best-selling strains of marijuana legally through Trulieve, one of Florida's largest dispensaries.

What benefits do you see for patients throughout Florida within the cannabis space?

The vast majority of users in Florida are seniors - my age group - who benefit from use for pain, sleep, Parkinson's, and lots of neurological and age-related illnesses, and epilepsy, post-traumatic stress disorders, arthritis and constipation to name a few. Doctors have prescribed cannabis products to ease side effects from cancer treatment (such as chemotherapy) and suppress the symptoms of many other diseases.

Experts indicate that abuse of alcohol and opioids can be reduced through use of cannabis and marijuana products. Whether it is included in tinctures, edibles, vapes, gummies, powders, or oils, marijuana is an available therapy to decrease symptoms such as anxiety and pain (not limited to seniors) that can turn patients into junkies who frequent 'pill mills'. Cannabis and marijuana have been shown to help patients gain weight, cope with chemo, treat glaucoma symptoms, and calm paranoia. Additionally, marijuana use can inhibit violent behavior and

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The New Wave: FL Anticipates to Double Number of MMTC License Holders

BY BARBARA R. FALLON

A new 'wave' is heading to the Sunshine State which will essentially double the number of licensed Medical Marijuana Treatment Center (MMTC) license holders over the next 16 months. The Florida Department of Health's Office of Medical Marijuana Use (OMMU) is currently processing the 2nd cycle of MMTC licenses, authorizing these companies to start their infrastructure buildout process to help serve the 719,366 qualified patients (active ID cards as of May 13th, 2022 OMMU webpage).

As with the current 22 Florida MMTC license holders, the new wave of companies will be required to cultivate, process, and dispense (retail) low-THC cannabis and medical marijuana. However, unlike a typical retail outlet which can simply open a store and purchase product directly from another company, the MMTC must be proficient at all product phases: grow-process-test-package before any product arrives at their own branded retail location. The term is commonly referred to as 'vertically integrated' or 'seed to sale.'

To a current or new MMTC license holder, 'seed-to-sale' means 'a lot of infrastructure.' This is where SR Construction Services (SRCS) fits in as a scalable 3rd party partner of their organization. Early and consistent collaboration amongst the design & architectural team, contractor, and equipment vendors is key to avoiding costly and time-consuming design alterations during construction.

Partnering with a Florida-based, statewide, cannabis-experienced GC, familiar with

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Marc Egort

Marc Egort, CPA, P.A.: Helping Your Business Navigate the Cannabis Industry

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

South Florida-based Marc Egort, CPA, P.A., was among the first statewide accounting firms to develop a portion of its practice dedicated to serving the cannabis industry. Founded in 1999, by its namesake, Marc Egort, the dedicated professionals at the firm had already been working closely with clients to provide core accounting services, tax compliance, and business consulting in various industries nationwide.

The boutique CPA firm expanded its business four years ago to provide accounting services to cannabis businesses, not just across the state, but across the nation as well. It offers a broad spectrum of accounting, financial reporting, tax compliance, and consulting services that give cannabis businesses the insight they need to grow and succeed.

"I got involved with the cannabis industry for several reasons," explains Egort. "My personal belief is that cannabis has a lot to offer for medicinal and health purposes. I also have a strong belief that there should be no incarceration for those who are users of cannabis. We're missing out on

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Trulieve Announces PRIDE-related Activities for June

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

Florida-based Trulieve, the largest cannabis company in the state, announced its vast initiatives for Pride Month, which directly support LGBTQ+ communities and families throughout the month of June. Trulieve is also launching several new products this month.

Trulieve will have three PRIDE related products launching:

- Mr. Fahrenheit and Mary & Jane Pre-Rolls – June 1
- Rainbow TruPod – June 1
- 1g Love Wins Vape - June 12

They will host activations in select stores every weekend during PRIDE month, tied to local area PRIDE events in Key West, Panama City, Orlando, St. Pete and more. Stay tuned to social media to learn about when and where these events will take place.

The Company is activating a Bingo campaign in Florida where patients will be rewarded with \$25 off \$125 for completed cards, and they will donate \$5 per card to Metro Inclusive Health, a 501(c)(3) organization that provides quality health and wellness services that are inclusive, relevant, supportive and represent the lifetime continuum of the diverse people in our community.

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